

Marzouk can be extradited — U.S. judge

NEW YORK (R) — A federal judge ruled on Wednesday that a Hamas political leader could be extradited to Israel because there was reasonable cause to believe he was linked to violence committed by the group. U.S. District Judge Kevin Duffy ordered that Musa Abu Marzouk be held in a New York City federal prison until he is turned over to Israeli authorities. "There is more than sufficient evidence to show that Abu Marzouk was a member of the conspiracy known as Hamas and that the acts charged against him were foreseeable consequences of the conspiracy," Mr. Duffy wrote. Israel alleges that the U.S.-educated Gaza was involved in a number of fatal bombings, shootings and stabbings between 1990 and 1994 and has raised money for and controlled the leadership of the military wing of the militant organisation. Mr. Abu Marzouk, 45, who has a home and business in Virginia, has said he headed the political bureau of Hamas but has denied involvement in bombings or other violence.

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Supplement on European Union

On the occasion of Europe Day (May 9), the Jordan Times is publishing a special ten-page supplement focusing on the members of the European Union, and their role in the Middle East and relations with Jordan. Europe Day commemorates the day in 1950 when the then French foreign minister, Robert Schuman, announced the establishment of the first European supranational economic institution charged with the management of the steel and coal industry. That institution has grown into the 15-member EU today. Please ask for your copy of the supplement.

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Father of 'Yitzhak Rabin' wants to settle in Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — A Jordanian farm worker who lost his job after naming his son Yitzhak Rabin said Wednesday he hoped to start a new life in Israel. Rajaei Said Namasi, 40, said he was visiting Israel at the invitation of an Israeli TV station, but was thinking of looking for a job and staying for good. Mr. Namasi said it was hard for him to find work in Jordan because of the publicity surrounding his decision to name his first-born son after the late Israeli prime minister. "No one would give me a job," said Mr. Namasi, who arrived in Israel 10 days ago, along with his wife Maryam and their infant son, and is staying with relatives in the town of Kfar Masr. Mr. Namasi's son was born on Jan. 26. Mr. Namasi said his employer at a farm in Amman told him the following day he could no longer work there. Asked why he had decided to come to Israel, Mr. Namasi said, "Because I like Israel. If I didn't, I wouldn't have caused all the trouble for myself and named by son Yitzhak Rabin." Mr. Namasi said he met Mr. Rabin's widow Leah, who promised to help him settle here. "She greeted us very warmly. I couldn't hold back my tears. Mrs. Rabin also cried," Mr. Namasi said.

Turks chase rebels into North Iraq

ANKARA (R) — Turkish troops backed by U.S.-made Cobra helicopter gunships drove into northern Iraq in pursuit of Kurdish guerrillas, killing at least 15 rebels, reports from the region said on Wednesday. Security sources said operations had been underway for several days, with troops penetrating up to 10 kilometres inside northern Iraq territory. The state-run Anatolian news agency said 15 rebels of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), battling for autonomy or independence in southeast Turkey, were killed by government artillery.

Palestinian journalists barred from covering Israeli poll

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Palestinian journalists protested Wednesday over Israel's refusal to let them out of the territories to cover Israeli national elections on May 29. "The coming elections represent an important event in the Middle East which will have a long and lasting effect on the lives of Arabs and Jews alike," said a statement issued by the Palestinian Audio Visual Union. Union officials said the military closure, slapped on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by Israel following the start of a spate of suicide bombings by militants in late February was being applied even to journalists holding press credentials issued by the Israeli government. "The closure has caused a major problem for Palestinian journalists trying to report on events in Israel for both the Palestinian and Arab press," said spokesman Waleed Barawi.

Saudis plan military city near Yemen

MANAMA (AP) — Saudi Arabia's defence minister on Wednesday laid the foundation stone of a new military city in the extreme southwest corner of the kingdom near the Yemen border, the official Saudi Press Agency reported. Saudi Arabia and Yemen have a decades-old border dispute which has erupted into clashes in the past. For more than a year, they have been seeking to find a settlement, but with little apparent progress. Much of the 2,000-kilometre border remains undefined, 62 years after the two countries signed an accord ending a brief border war.

Regent urges world focus on Palestinian refugee problem

Pending a final settlement, attention should be given to well-being of refugees, Crown Prince tells donors
Jordan bears major share of burden despite own problems

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Wednesday urged the international community to focus immediately on the human, physical and economic dimensions of the Palestinian refugee problem until a just, permanent and equitable solution is achieved to their problem.

Addressing a United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) informal meeting of major donors and host governments, Prince Hassan stated that "UNRWA must have a planning time horizon that can cope with the peacebuilding era without prejudice to the resolution of the demographic component of the conflict."

In his key note address, Prince Hassan also expressed support for the relocation of the agency's external relations department from Vienna to Gaza, but voiced concern that certain donor nation embassies in Tel Aviv would be empowered to deal with the refugee problem from there.

"It is not only for reasons of efficiency, practicality and logistics that I regard this particular development as worrying, (but) particularly if we are to address the comprehensiveness of the refugee question in the five

provinces of refugees," stated the Regent. Lebanon and Syria, both host provinces, do not maintain diplomatic relations with Israel, which, in addition, does not host any refugees.

In stark contrast to Israel's position, 1.3 million, or 40.6 per cent of the total refugees reside in Jordan. This figure represents two thirds of all listed refugees residing outside the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

See page 7 for full text of Regent's address

In addition, there are between 700,000-800,000 Palestinians classified as displaced persons living in the Kingdom.

Prince Hassan noted that since 1952, Jordan gave full citizenship to Palestinian refugees already settled in the Kingdom. Citizenship has provided the refugees and their descendants equal rights and obligations.

But about 20 per cent of registered refugees and displaced persons currently live in 10 camps around the Kingdom.

"It is estimated that the Jordanian government contributes about \$300 million per year... to the Palestinian refugees," the Regent said.

This sum, he said, includes rental of the camps' land, education costs of

refugee students attending government schools (above the tenth grade), improvements in camp infrastructure and the provision of medical care in government hospitals.

The Regent pointed to the irony that while Jordan struggles to sustain these services, the country has had to "adopt structural readjustment and reforms to liberalise the economy and has taken the necessary steps towards balancing its

budget." These measures, he added, make it more difficult for Jordan to support UNRWA's budget.

"Perhaps a reversal is more in order and UNRWA should be made able to assume its own responsibility towards refugees, which places more emphasis on the role of donor countries supporting UNRWA's budget," Prince Hassan said.

UNRWA's Commissioner-General Peter Hansen supported the Regent by underlining that "host countries, in real terms, are very often the major donors."

With regard to the relocation of UNRWA's headquarters, Mr. Hansen pointed to the obvious benefits of on-site location, which should lead to an expansion of services and

other improvements.

The decision to relocate UNRWA's headquarters came last year and some of its offices are to be situated here. The move is expected to take place by July 15.

The deputy assistant secretary of the Washington Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, Marguerite Houze, also spoke supportively of the move to Gaza, saying it would "bring the various units together."

Relocation is estimated to cost about \$14 million. The agency has secured almost half of that through donations.

"We have contributed \$2 million," said Ms. Houze, adding that her team was "encouraging others to do the same."

"We understand there is (currently) a short-fall, and it's preferable the agency doesn't have to dip into its general fund," she added.

In the long-term, relocation should free some administrative expenditure, she said.

While noting that final settlement talks between the Palestinian National Authority and Israel were launched this week, Prince Hassan pointed to the negotiations' unpredictable outcome, which, in the meantime, "keeps refugees bewildered as to what the

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His Majesty King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak laugh as they invite each other to answer a question during a joint press conference in Cairo on Wednesday (Reuters photo)

King reiterates support for Palestinians and Lebanon in efforts to restore their rights

HM, Mubarak discuss peace process

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein on Wednesday reaffirmed Jordan's total support for the Palestinian people in their struggle to regain their rights and said that the Kingdom backed Lebanon in its quest for an Israeli withdrawal from its territories.

The King, addressing a joint press conference with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak after a meeting here, said his discussions with the Egyptian leader covered the situation in Iraq, the Palestinian question, the Middle East peace process, Jordanian-Egyptian relations and means to achieve Arab reconciliation.

The King, who was joined in the meeting by Prime

Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and several ministers as well as Egyptian Prime Minister Kamal Jazouli and his ministers, also reiterated Jordan's concern over the suffering of the people of Iraq and the Kingdom's rejection of any move towards fragmenting its eastern neighbour.

"We will do everything we can to improve the conditions of the Iraqis," said the King. "We look for Iraq coming back to its Arab family and its position in the world and to get out of the very dark tunnel."

"We will help the Iraqis regain their rights. We are for the integrity of Iraq and the sovereignty of it and for the Iraqi family to come together and not to fragment."

The King, who, along with Her Majesty Queen Noor, made a stopover here on his way home after visits to Britain, France and Germany, returned home later Wednesday along with the Jordanian delegation which attended the Cairo meetings. Also accompanying the King was Royal Court Chief Awn Kasawneh.

In his comments at the Cairo press conference, the King described Jordanian-Egyptian relations as "deep-rooted."

President Mubarak referred to a meeting held in Amman of the Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee on Tuesday and Wednesday (see separate

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U.N. defends its report suggesting deliberate Israeli attack on Cana

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The United Nations on Wednesday defended the conclusions of a U.N. report which said Israel probably had deliberately shelled a U.N. camp, saying the document was "balanced and objective."

Meanwhile, Lebanon urged the Security Council to condemn Israel for shelling the U.N. camp.

"Lebanon is asking the council to condemn Israel for its crime it has committed against the Lebanese people and the U.N. compound," Lebanese Ambassador Samir Mubarak told reporters. "We hope the council will take swift action in this regard."

Following the April 18 attack, the council called for a ceasefire between Israel and Hizbollah guerrillas but rejected an Arab-sponsored resolution which blamed Israel exclusively for the fighting in southern Lebanon.

But Mr. Mubarak said he would ask the council to take up the issue again in the wake of the U.N. report.

"The report is very eloquent," Mr. Mubarak said. "The responsibility of Israel is very clear for all the public opinion of the world. This is why we are asking the council to take a very swift and strong action condemning Israel in this regard."

There was no indication whether the council would discuss Lebanon's request, which was expected to draw strong opposition from the United States.

Reeling from international reactions to the report by U.N. special envoy Brigadier General Frank van Kappen, U.N. spokeswoman Sylvana Foa said at a news briefing that the U.N. intention "was not to embarrass, or accuse,

any member state."

"We went out there to establish the facts so that steps can be taken to see that an incident like this will not happen again. The report is balanced and objective. The facts speak for themselves. It's difficult to understand the strong reactions from some quarters," she said.

Arab governments and newspapers lashed out at Israel and the United States over the U.N. report.

"Go to hell, Clinton" was the refrain from Egyptian newspapers amid Arab anger at the U.S. defence of Israel in its April 18 attack against the camp in Cana, where 850 Lebanese civilians had taken shelter (see page 2).

The reaction came after U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright criticised the report, saying the "unjustified conclusions about this incident that can only divide and polarise the environment, rather than drawing practical lessons that could prevent the tragedy from occurring again."

Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri said the report proved Israel deliberately targeted the refugee-packed camp, and its actions would harm the Middle East peace process.

Speaking during a visit to Rome, he said there was "no doubt this will affect the peace process... the image of Israel and the image of (Israeli Premier Shimon) Peres as a man looking for peace."

"What the Israeli army has done is exactly the contrary. You cannot talk about peace and make war," he added. "Now it has been proven that Israel deliberately destroyed the camp," Mr. Hariri added.

"I hear the Israelis are claiming the U.N. did not tell them that there were refugees," he said. "It is a very strange answer because they are saying in another word they are allowing themselves to fire on U.N. camps."

An official Syrian newspaper charged Israel aimed "to kill as many Arabs as possible" in its attack on the U.N. compound as part of its assault on Hizbollah guerrillas.

"They had nothing to justify their criminal act but to say that there were map errors," the Syria Times said, referring to the Israeli army's defence.

"Given the fact that the Israelis have sophisticated weapons and very advanced monitoring systems, it is very hard to believe their lies about map errors," the paper said.

"The massacre was deliberate. It was masterminded to kill as many Arabs as possible," it charged.

The head of the Arab League said the U.N. report "constitutes a piece of evidence and an important official document on the premeditated Israeli carnage against innocent Lebanese civilians on a U.N. base."

Mr. Peres rejected the U.N. suggestion that Israel deliberately shelled the camp saying the U.N. report was "one-sided."

To bolster Israel's claims that it did use a reconnaissance plane to help target the Cana base, the military released footage from a camera aboard the aircraft that indicates it arrived over the U.N. base after the shelling began.

The existence of the pilotless aircraft, or drone, was initially denied by Israel.

Arafat delays naming cabinet

RAFAH (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat again postponed the unveiling of his new cabinet, Wednesday as the Palestinian self-rule legislature opened a two-day session here.

"I'm not finished with my consultations yet," Mr. Arafat told the 88-member council when speaker Ahmad Qureia asked if the new government list was ready.

Under the laws which governed the Palestinians' historic first elections in January, Mr. Arafat was to have named his executive council, or cabinet, by early April.

He obtained a two-week delay from the legislative council on April 10, but then missed that deadline due to

(Continued on page 2)

Jordan and Egypt sign free-trade accord, reaffirm strong relations

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and Egypt on Wednesday signed four accords to step up economic cooperation and reaffirmed the two countries' commitment to maintaining a close "strategic" relationship unhindered by occasional differences in viewpoints.

The agreements were announced in a joint communique issued after a two-day meeting of the Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee chaired by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and his Egyptian counterpart Kamal Jazouli.

One of the main points covered in the agreement is a project to set up a free trade zone through the gradual elimination of customs and other trade barriers.

The accords call for increased cooperation in investment promotion and protection, and prevention of dual taxation. Also signed was an executive programme on cooperation in tourism (see full text of the joint communique on page 12).

Mohammad Smadi, secretary-general of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, who read out the communique, said the two sides had not set a target for trade but would be negotiating it soon. (Figures released by the Department of Statistics and quoted by the Central Bank of Jordan showed Jordanian imports from Egypt in 1995 were worth JD 32.4 million while the Kingdom's exports to Egypt totalled JD 8.82 million).

Addressing a press conference after signing the agreements, Mr. Kabariti and

Mr. Jazouli said the two countries were committed to maintaining close relations and were seeking to enhance the scope of cooperation.

Answering a question on bilateral ties, Mr. Kabariti conceded that there could be different viewpoints on an issue-by-issue basis but this had no impact on the close ties between the two countries.

"Jordanian-Egyptian ties are a strategic relationship based on strategic interests" regardless of possible differences in viewpoints on issues, said Mr. Kabariti.

"We are comforted by the strength of Jordanian-Egyptian relations and their ability to overcome differences that might come up now and then because of different perceptions," he added.

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Iraq says U.N. should reconcile draft accords

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Iraq's chief negotiator in oil-for-food talks said it was now up to the United Nations to find a compromise between American and British positions and proposals Iraq had negotiated earlier.

"It is for the United Nations how to mix this, how to recombine them, how to rewrite them. We are negotiating with the secretary general on his own ideas," said the leader of the Iraqi team, Ambassador Abdul Amir Al Anbari, on Tuesday.

Baghdad and the United Nations this week began a fourth round of talks, which resume on Wednesday, on a U.N. offer enabling Iraq to sell \$2 billion of oil over six months to buy food and other supplies for its people hard

hit by sanctions.

The oil-for-food plan, outlined in Security Council Resolution 986, is exempt from the trade sanctions imposed after Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

The Iraqi government has said the United States and Britain will be to blame if the latest round of talks fail to produce an agreement, the official Iraqi news agency reports.

It quoted a statement issued by the cabinet Tuesday night after a meeting chaired by President Saddam Hussein as saying that "U.S. and British interference in the dialogue is unlawful behaviour with malignant political objectives."

"Iraq wants the talks to

(Continued on page 7)



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U.S. rules out use of nuclear arms against Libyan plant

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States on Tuesday ruled out a nuclear attack to destroy an underground chemical weapons plant that it says is under construction in Libya.

"Should military options be necessary, we can accomplish this with conventional means," Defense Department spokesman Ken Bacon said. "There is no consideration to using nuclear weapons and any implication that we would use nuclear weapons preemptively against this plant is just wrong."

But Mr. Bacon told reporters who asked about recent statements by Defense Secretary William Perry that Washington did not rule out using nuclear arms in response to a nuclear, chemical or biological attack on the United States or its forces.

He said President George Bush and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney had also promised such a devastating response and had refused to rule out nuclear weapons in all circumstances.

Libya has denied that the facility at Tarhuna, 65 kilometres from Tripoli, is a chemical weapons plant and has accused Washington of trying to bully it.

"There has been some confusion about this in the press and I am glad to be able to

clear it up," Mr. Bacon said when asked if the U.S. military use a nuclear bomb or missile to keep the Libya facility from opening.

The Pentagon said recently it did not yet have non-nuclear earth-penetrating bombs capable of destroying the plant. But Mr. Bacon said the facility would not be completed for at least a year and the United States was confident its international diplomatic effort would keep Libya from completing the work.

Pressed on whether the Pentagon might develop conventional bombs to destroy a deeply buried facility, Mr. Bacon said, "we have a wide and growing range of conventional weapons."

"We are not trying to sabre rattle here. We want to be very clear. We are not talking about using nuclear weapons against the Tarhuna plant. I don't know how to say it more clearly than that."

Mr. Perry said during a recent visit to Egypt that the United States would not allow Libya to open the Tarhuna plant. He also told Congress Washington would respond to any direct nuclear, chemical or biological attack on the United States with overwhelming force he refused to rule out nuclear weapons in that response.

Suggestions by Mr. Perry and others that the United States might retaliate with nuclear weapons against a chemical arms attack sent shock waves through diplomatic circles.

Arms control advocates worry that when negotiations on a nuclear comprehensive test ban treaty resume in Geneva on May 15, Mr. Perry's remarks will be seized upon as evidence of U.S. bad faith and undercut the push for a treaty this year.

Mr. Perry told military officers at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama on April 26 that "in every situation that I have seen so far, nuclear weapons would not be required for response—that is, we could have a devastating response without the use of nuclear weapons."

"But we would not forewarn that possibility," Mr. Perry added.

Since 1978, the United States has promised it will not use nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear state that is a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) or a similar pact.

The United States renewed the pledge in its successful 1995 push to make the NPT permanent and repeated it recently when it signed a protocol making Africa a nuclear-free zone.

Saddam says returned defectors were killed without his approval

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein says he did not give his consent for the killing of returned defector Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel Hassan but the family's honour, tarnished by his treason, had to be cleansed.

"Had they asked me, I would have prevented them but it was good they did not," President Saddam said in remarks carried by state-run newspapers on Wednesday.

Hussein Kamel, the brains behind Iraq's military and civil industries, and his brother Saddam fled to Jordan in August last year. They, another brother and their father were murdered by kinsmen upon their return to Baghdad in February.

The brothers were married

to Saddam Hussein's daughters, Raghdad and Rana.

During their six months in Jordan they called for the overthrow of their father-in-law but were spurned by Iraqi opposition groups for their past links with the government in Baghdad.

President Saddam's remarks, in a meeting with tribal chiefs from the Western province of Anbar, were his first on the defectors since their ill-fated return from Jordan.

President Saddam said the harm inflicted by Hussein Kamel on Iraq was more painful than any traitors who preceded him and those who might come after him.

The fleeing of Hussein Kamel prompted the authorities in Baghdad to make new

revelations of past weapons activities.

The disclosures spurred the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) disarming Iraq under the 1991 Gulf war ceasefire to reconsider its past disarmament activities in Iraq and reopen the country's weapons files.

The ban on Iraqi oil exports can only be eased or lifted when UNSCOM is completely satisfied that Iraq has honoured all its weapons obligations.

In his comments published Wednesday, President Saddam said that "while there were no degrees of treason," that of his son-in-law, "a member of the family," was "enormous and without parallel in the harm it did to the country."

Committee on Palestinian rights urged to stay active

NEW YORK (UNIS) — The Middle East is undergoing a decade phase of change and the international community should be especially vigilant of the peace process in that region, the committee on the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people was told Tuesday as it adopted its 1996 programme of work and elected new officers.

Ibra Deguene Ka (Senegal), committee chairman, called for the organisation to maintain its "principled position" regarding the situation in Palestine.

Nasser Al Kidwa, observer of Palestine, told the committee the Palestinian National Council had adopted a special resolution on the United Nations in which it had stressed that the organisation and the committee should continue their work until such time as Palestine became independent. At that session the council had eliminated those provisions of the Palestinian National Charter which were contradictory to

the contents of letters exchanged between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel in September 1993.

Under its 1996 programme of work, the committee will sponsor the United Nations seminar on assistance to the Palestinian people, to take place from May 21 to 23 in Cairo, and United Nations non-governmental organisation symposium on the question of Palestine, to take place from June 24 to 26 at headquarters. In response to the financial situation of the organisation, the committee will seek co-sponsors for selected meetings, and will seek to combine symposia and seminars where possible.

Priority tasks under the 1996 programme focus on the permanent responsibility of the United Nations regarding Palestine until a just and lasting settlement is reached, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973); the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem

and other Arab territories; and the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, in particular the right to self-determination. The committee will also endeavour to assist implementation of the agreements reached by the parties; and to cooperate with governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations and organisations within the United Nations system in carrying out its mandate.

Also on Tuesday, the committee approved applications for accreditation from 22 non-governmental organisations, all of which had been recommended by the committee's regional coordinating committees.

Elected to the bureau were: Ibra Deguene Ka (Senegal), chairman; Ravan Farhadi (Afghanistan) and Bruno Rodriguez Parilla (Cuba), reelected as vice chairman; and Joseph Casar (Malta) reelected rapporteur.

Cairo papers assail Clinton in Cana row

CAIRO (AFP) — "Go to hell, Clinton" was the refrain from Egyptian newspapers on Wednesday amid Arab anger at the U.S. defence of Israel in the Cana massacre in Lebanon.

An editorial in the government daily Al-Akhbar slammed the United States for its "alignment with Israel to the degree of joining it in its aggression against Lebanon."

"The U.S. administration has abandoned all values and moral principles which it is supposed to defend," wrote editor-in-chief Galal Dawoud on the front page.

The reaction came after the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, criticised a U.N. report released Tuesday which said Israel's shelling of the U.N. camp at Cana killing 102 Lebanese refugees was probably deliberate.

Ms. Albright said the report came to "unjustified conclusions."

Egyptian papers attacked the U.S. response as capping off what is seen as increasing support of Israel by the United States, the chief sponsor of the Middle East peace process.

The Arabic-language bi-weekly Al-Dustur ran a photo of U.S. President Bill Clinton in front of the Israeli flag on its front-page Wednesday with an English caption in red letters, "Clinton: Go to Hell."

"You consider that the only way for you to stay in power is to hand Arab states over to Israel's Jews even at the cost of death and destruction," the paper wrote in an editorial addressed to Mr. Clinton.

"Clinton has showered so many gifts and give-aways on Israel it has even raised the doubts of some Israelis" about his intentions, it said.

"America is no longer an honest broker due to Clinton's policy," said an article in Al-Akhbar, citing a May 6 article in the International Herald Tribune which was reprinted in a number of Egyptian papers.

Syria blasts U.S.

Syria blasted the United States for signing new military agreements with Israel and said the Clinton administration's support has encouraged the Jewish state to move away from the Middle East peace process.

"Israel's aggression on Lebanon and the subsequent military agreements between Washington and Tel Aviv have deviated the Jewish state from the course of a just and comprehensive peace to seek hegemony and control of the region," Damascus Radio said.

The United States agreed last week to provide Israel with advanced technology and intelligence to improve its anti-missile defences and to develop an anti-terrorism alliance.

The radio maintained in a commentary that U.S. support had encouraged Israel to launch the bombardment of South Lebanon last month.

"Israel could not have launched its aggression on Lebanon without American support," the commentary said.

It noted that Israel had also been encouraged by "the absence of a unified Arab stance."

The radio reiterated that peace in the Middle East will only be achieved by an Israeli withdrawal from Arab land.

The radio warned that the flow of advanced weaponry into Israel will encourage the Jewish state to believe it can launch attacks anywhere and any time they want.

Prisoners on strike in Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's interior minister said in remarks published on Wednesday that 113 inmates at a detention centre were on a hunger strike to press for their release.

The minister, Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah, said 242 inmates at a holding centre for foreigners awaiting deportation had stopped eating about three days ago but by Tuesday their number had fallen to 113, the Kuwait Times reported.

Doctors were examining the 113 at the Talha deportation centre, who included Iranians, Iraqis and stateless people, among others. They wanted to be deported to states willing to accept them or to be freed, Sheikh Ali was reported as saying.

The government was continuing the contacts it routinely held with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees to find countries willing to take Talha inmates due for deportation, the English-language newspaper reported him as saying.

Talha, a converted school, was set up after the 1991 Gulf war to house foreigners who have completed jail terms and are awaiting deportation.

Its inmates include common criminals and foreigners who lack work permits, some of them Iraqi job seekers. It also houses people who have broken residency rules and cannot go to their home countries for lack of money for the return air fare or for fear of maltreatment.

Kuwait has said it will not force the Iraqis to go home and international humanitarian organisations say many third countries are unwilling to accept Iraqis as refugees.

King Hassan pledges changes, no imitation

PARIS (R) — King Hassan of Morocco, boycotted by some leftists, told France's National Assembly on Tuesday his country would introduce reforms to give parliament a greater say but ruled out copying "modern" Western democracies.

In an address that was the centrepiece of a two-day state visit, the veteran monarch responded indirectly to communist and some socialist deputies who left the chamber before his speech in protest at his human rights record and limited democracy.

"The term modernity in political life is open to abuse. Some of those who use it seem to believe political modernity requires that, regardless of geography and history, all world states should have uniform institutions. They are wrong."

"Make no mistake about it, there is no question of copying each other. On constitutional issues, there is no industrial process that produces turnkey institutional factories. Mere imitation would be sterile," said the 66-year-old monarch.

French President Jacques Chirac, in comments expected to provoke widespread incredulity among opponents of the visit, said the king was a champion of human rights.

"You have made Morocco a true law-abiding state... and demonstrated your attachment to human rights," Mr. Chirac said in a toast at a state dinner.

Mr. Chirac, in a further comment expected to draw particular attention, praised King Hassan for "early on launching the fight against drug production and traffic."

Critics have prominently recalled the Paris-based General Observatory on Drugs (OGD), a European Union-backed monitoring group, has for years said drug-related corruption was especially prevalent in Morocco, a main drugs producer.

Since his election one year ago, Mr. Chirac has worked to bolster Morocco and Tunisia as firewalls against fundamentalist violence that has racked Algeria since the army intervened in 1992 to



King Hassan II

stop the Islamic Salvation Front winning a general election.

Free press spokeswoman Catherine Colonna said Mr. Chirac had "hailed Morocco's European strategy," noting the kingdom held a pivotal role in Mediterranean stability, and said it should inspire confidence in foreign investors.

A demonstration called by some 52 mostly leftist groups against King Hassan's presence flapped when only a few hundred people showed up. Police put the number of participants at less than 250. There were no incidents.

King holds talks with Mubarak

(Continued from page 1)

story) and said it took place in a brotherly spirit. "We are moving towards achieving all aspirations of the Jordanian and Egyptian people," he said. "Our relations are based on mutual confidence..."

In reply to a question whether the Israeli elections on May 29 would have any effect on the Israeli-Palestinian track of the peace process, Mr. Mubarak said: "The Palestinian question has been complicated for the last 40 to 50 years. It is not easy to solve it, especially with the spread of settlements. If this question was solved in the aftermath of the Camp David agreement in 1979, it could have been solved easily, for the settlements were few in number. But I think the Palestinian-Israeli approach will move forward in spite of all obstacles."

The Egyptian president said he and the King discussed plans to hold a tripartite summit with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and said, "It will take place in the near future, but... we have not come to a conclusion yet" when and where it would be held.

King Hussein said: "We hope the meeting will convene in Egypt in the near future."

On a question on Arab East Jerusalem, the King said Jordan stands by the Palestinians in their effort to regain their rights on their national soil and that Jerusalem should be a symbol of peace in the region.

Go Lebanon, the King said: "We support the Lebanese government and people towards implementing U.N. Resolution 425 and extending Lebanese sovereignty to the whole territory," of Lebanon.

In reply to a question on his recent visits to Britain, France and Germany, the King said: "Our relations with Europe are deep-rooted and very important. Europe plays a leading role in this period. We look for developing it further. We discussed bilateral issues. We encouraged Europe to exercise a greater role in the region to make a good future for the Middle East and the generations to come."

The King and Mr. Mubarak said regional blocs like the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC), which used to group Egypt, Jordan, Yemen and Iraq, and the Arab Magreb Union of five North African Arab countries had proved to be fruitless and bearing negative effects. As such, they said, the only means for solving issues of common concern

to the Arabs is through the Arab League.

Mr. Mubarak said the United States was still a "fair partner" despite Arab anger over the American defence over the Israeli massacre of over 100 civilians at a U.N. base during its recent blitz against Lebanon.

"I cannot say that the United States is not a fair partner," he said. "The circumstances are completely different now. There are elections here and there. The United States is a very important partner in the peace process."

"U.S.-Israeli relations are well-known," he said. "It is said (the U.S.) supports Israel and it is nothing new. If there are any circumstances which we are not satisfied with, we have to contact our partner. The European Community is needed. Europe is so close to the area. So we cannot ignore the European Community's efforts."

The King described Jordan's relations with the U.S. as strong and said: "We will use our contacts in the U.S. and other parts of the world to bring about peace in the region, defend our rights and our generations to come on the Arab soil in the whole Arab World."

On the recently signed military agreement between Israel and Turkey that has drawn strong Arab criticism, Mr. Mubarak said that every country had the right to sign agreements, but "if these were to affect the region or the neighbours, we should have our own say. We have no idea about the provisions of the agreement to judge it."

Reporting on the King's talks with President Mubarak, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said they discussed the Middle East peace process and the situation in the region. They expressed their support for the April 27 ceasefire in Lebanon and for efforts to enable the Lebanese government to ensure its sovereignty on all Lebanese territories.

The two leaders also voiced their support for the Palestinian people and the Palestinian National Authority in its current negotiations for a permanent settlement with Israel-Petra said.

King Hussein briefed President Mubarak on the outcome of his talks with European leaders during his latest visit to European capitals during which he discussed the Middle East, Arab-European partnership and Europe's aid to enhance peace in the Middle East.

The two leaders also reviewed the general Arab situation and efforts to end differences among Arab states.

Arafat delays naming cabinet

(Continued from page 1)

an April 24 meeting of the Palestinian National Council, which convened to remove anti-Israeli clauses from the movement's charter.

"Maybe I will ask for another delay," Mr. Arafat told the council on Wednesday.

But Mr. Qorqora later announced that "President Arafat will present his cabinet tomorrow."

Council sources said Mr. Arafat may decide to name a mini-cabinet of 15-17 members at Thursday's session, and put off an announcement of other ministers until later. The government team is

expected to have around 25 ministers in all.

Officials said the cabinet would include most of Mr. Arafat's 18-member outgoing autonomy government plus a number of independents and other figures from the new legislature and that no surprises or changes of direction were expected.

"Policy will not be changed by the new cabinet because it is part of a clear strategy."

Other legislators said they hoped the new cabinet would have the political weight to influence decision making, largely dominated in the past by Mr. Arafat.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 73111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 — The New Three Stooges
18:25 — NBA
18:30 — Doc Comedy — The Crystal Maze
18:40 — Doc — Pirates
18:45 — Gillette World Sport Special
17:00 — News Flash
17:02 — Children's Programme — Le Chat Perche
17:30 — Varieties — Les Monde Est A Vous
19:00 — News in French
19:15 — Magazine — Archimede
19:30 — News Headlines
19:35 — Comedy — Carol and Company
20:00 — Tanakira
21:10 — Star Trek
22:00 — News in English
22:25 — Feature film: "The Winner Takes It All"

PRAYER TIMES

06:12 — Fajr
05:39 — Sunrise
12:23 — Dhuhr
16:12 — Asr
19:25 — Maghreb
20:53 — Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swaidah, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures are expected to drop slightly with unstable weather conditions prevailing. Showers are also expected in different parts of the Kingdom and winds westerly to northwesterly moderate. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 20/30

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Amman (Marka Airport) (RW) 08:50
Amman (Marka Airport) (RW) 20:30
Amman (OAA) (RW) 22:00

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:15 — Beirut (RJ)
12:15 — Rome (RJ)
12:20 — Amsterdam, Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
13:00 — Paris (RJ)
13:00 — Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:00 — Jeddah (add) (RJ)
13:15 — Athens (RJ)
13:25 — London (RJ)
14:05 — Aqaba, Paris (add) (RJ)
17:20 — Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
19:15 — Moscow (RJ)

08:20 — Abu Dhabi, Hayat (add) (RJ)
20:30 — Larnaca (RJ)
21:15 — Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:05 — Jeddah (add) (RJ)
22:50 — Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
02:45 — Amsterdam (add) (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:00 — Riyadh (SV)
12:40 — Abu Dhabi, Doha (RJ)
14:00 — Sharjah (AH)
17:00 — Dubai (EK)
20:25 — Paris, Damascus (AF)
21:10 — Beirut (ME)
21:20 — Cairo (MS)
21:20 — Istanbul (TK)
23:25 — London (RJ)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

08:20 — Aqaba (RW)
09:00 — Amman QAA (arrives at Marka Airport at 10:20) (RW)

08:20 — Same (RJ)

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:20 — Same (RJ)

08:20 — Same (RJ)

08:20 — Same (RJ)



HRH Princess Basma Wednesday receives at her office the president of the executive committee of General Federation of Jordanian Women and a federation delegation. At the meeting, Princess Basma called for solving the issues of a proposed women's quota in Parliament and uniting women's efforts to better serve Jordanian women (Petra photo)

Kingdom observes World Traffic Day

Public urged to curb road accident rate

By Ahmad Kreishan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In 1995 Jordan reported 28,970 road accidents in which 469 people were killed, 13,184 others were injured and 50,386 vehicles were either destroyed or damaged, according to the Public Security Department (PSD).

At a meeting Wednesday, held at the Palace of Culture and organised in observance of World Traffic Day, PSD Assistant Director Major General Ahmad Dmour compared the above figures with 1994 records showing 26,837 road accidents resulting in 443 deaths, injury to 12,516 and destruction or damage to 46,805 vehicles.

The rise, said Maj. Gen. Dmour, was mainly due to reckless driving, exceeding speed limits and wrongful overtaking — all major violations of traffic rules, he stressed.

To help reduce the number of accidents, the PSD committee which prepared for the World Traffic Day has been active over the past year in spreading public awareness of road safety through publications, docu-



Public Security Department (PSD) Director Major General Nasouh Muheiddin (center) Wednesday opens a meeting on road accidents in Jordan at the Palace of Culture (Petra photo)

mentary films, sponsored marches, children's theatre productions and other activities, he noted.

The meeting was opened by PSD Director Major General Nasouh Muheiddin who deputised for Minister of Interior Awad Khleifat.

Maj. Gen. Muheiddin called on citizens to join the efforts of the concerned authorities in reducing road accidents and preventing

further carnage on the roads.

Mohammad Dabbas, president of the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents, also appealed to the public to respect the traffic regulations, and urged the concerned traffic authorities to initiate courses to retrain drivers in order to reduce the number of accidents.

Ahmad Qolag, the father

of young man who was killed in a recent road accident, addressed the meeting and appealed to the public to respect traffic rules and stop reckless actions which can result in tragedy. The PSD director later distributed awards to citizens from the public and private sectors in recognition of their endeavours to reduce road accidents.

AUB alumni to hold engineering conference

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A conference that focuses on engineering in the Arab World in light of advancements internationally opens in Amman today tackling education, challenges, resources, problems and constraints in various disciplines of the profession.

The May 9-11 conference, held under the patronage of Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor, is the second of its kind organised by the American University of Beirut (AUB) Alumni Club. The club organised an AUB medical conference in Amman last year.

The event, which will mainly involve detailed lectures on various aspects of engineering, is expected to be attended by 20 professors from the AUB faculty of engineering as well as Jordanian experts.

Two visitors from the U.S. and Qatar will also make presentations, organisers said.

The conference is held under the theme "New Horizons in Engineering and Technology in the Arab Region," and will cover issues in sectors such as construction, transportation, industry, water resources, the environment, architecture and communications.

A general idea of the nature of the discussions could be derived from the scheduled lectures, which include engineering education, challenges facing the construction industry in the Arab World, natural resources, nuclear energy and industrial development, structural engineering, architectural practices, power systems, communication networks, solid waste management, multimedia, energy, advance technologies, transportation etc.

Among those delivering lectures will be Nabil Boulos, Nassir Sabah, Mohammad Akra, Ibrahim Abu Ayyash, Awni Saket (former Jordanian minister), Bilal Hamad, Mohammad Haraji, Assem Abdul

Malek, Neddy Jouzy, George Ayoub, Constantine Inglassis, Najeeb Tleel, Maher Hijazin, Riad Chedid, Mutassem Fadel, Rida Nuwayhid, Awni Masri (former Jordanian minister), Khaled Touqan, Fouad Murad, Mutassem Salzman, Toufic Mezher, Yousef Hayek, Osama Madi, Hassan Diab, Ali Al Hajj, Mounir Yehia, Isam Kayssi, Hani Haqqi, Jaffar Touqan, and Basam Anani.

Concluding remarks will be made by Ali Suheimat, a former deputy prime minister of Jordan.

The conference will be held at the Jordan Contractors Association.

Hundreds of Jordanian personalities, including ministers, ex-ministers and top-ranking officials in Jordan are graduates of the American University of Beirut. The AUB Alumni Club in Jordan is one of the most active organisations set up by graduates of the university, established in 1866.

Piano lovers rejoice

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A concert, obviously dedicated to absolute lovers of classical piano music, will be presented by Jordan's beloved pianist Agnes Bashir who will perform with Hassan Mufti and Oksana Muslehon Friday evening, May 10, at the New English School Theatre in Amman.

The three pianists are well-known for their talent and virtuosity. Hassan Mufti is of Iraqi origin, and young Oksana Muslehon comes from Ukraine. Agnes Bashir needs no introduction. She has been living in the Kingdom for many years and has already given numerous concerts here. Her countless music-related activities — composing, arranging, accompanying, etc. — have won her extensive popularity in Amman's music circles.

Friday's concert will bring innovation. The performers will be playing together instead of taking turns in solo parts. Using all possible combinations, they will play four-hands on one piano, usual two-hands on two pianos and — a first in Jordan — the three pianos simultaneously.

The programme will include pieces by Maurice Ravel, Darius Milhaud, and by Sergie Rachmaninov.

The concert is held under the patronage of Their Royal Highnesses Prince Raed Ben Zeid and Princess Majda Raed.

Bahrain thanks Jordan for stand on sabotage attacks

AMMAN (Petra) — Bahrain has expressed its gratitude and appreciation to Jordan for its stand on the recent incidents of sabotage in the Gulf state which "aim at killing innocent people and damaging to the economy."

Speaking at a meeting with Senate Speaker Ahmad Lawzi and other senators, visiting Bahraini Shura Council Speaker Ibrahim Hmeidan Wednesday said his government and the people of Bahrain are determined to foil attempts by saboteurs and other groups to tamper with the country's security and stability or destroy the country's achievements.

Mr. Hmeidan said the situation in Bahrain was reassuring, and the country was able to quell the disturbances and restore order.

He called for further cooperation between Jordan and Bahrain in all fields, particularly in economic sectors.

For his part, Mr. Lawzi voiced Jordan's backing of Bahrain's efforts to restore stability and pursue its march for progress. He said the two countries are



Speaker of the Senate Ahmad Lawzi Wednesday receives Bahraini Shura Council Speaker Ibrahim Hmeidan (Petra photo)

closely linked through brotherly relations.

Two people were reported to have been wounded in the latest incident in Bahrain when a time-bomb exploded at a bus stop. Bahraini authorities issued warnings urging the public to take extra precautions

against further acts by government opposition groups.

Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Tuesday called his Bahraini counterpart, Sheikh Khalifeh Ben Salman Al Khalifeh, voicing Jordan's strong support for Bahrain's security and

stability.

Mr. Lawzi and the other senators briefed the Bahraini official and his delegation on the democratic process in Jordan, stressing the Kingdom's desire to cooperate with Bahrain in parliamentary and shura affairs.

New association seeks to promote family medicine in region

AMMAN (J.T.) — Since 1989 the Health Ministry has been working with Jordanian universities and international organisations, including the World Health Organisation (WHO), to promote the family medicine practice and train doctors for this specialisation, according to Minister of Health Aref Bataineh.

Opening the first Conference of the Jordan Society of Family Medicine (JSFM) at the Royal Cultural Centre Wednesday, Dr. Bataineh said the ministry established study centres in family and community medicine and concluded agreements with various organisations to ensure continued training for doctors and specialists.

"This conference," he said, is designed to underline the importance of family medicine as an essential element in primary health care services in Jordan and the Arab region.

Dr. Bataineh said family medicine was also important in the fight against diseases and in ensuring good health for all members of society.

According to Mazen Bashir, the JSFM president, the Kingdom currently has



Minister of Health Aref Bataineh Wednesday opens the first conference of the Jordan Society of Family Medicine (JSFM) at the Royal Cultural Centre (Petra photo)

120 doctors specialised in practicing family medicine, in addition to 30 interns being trained in a four-year programme at the University of Jordan, the Jordan University of Science and Technology, the Royal Medical Services and the Ministry of Health hospitals.

He said when the initial plans were set for starting family medicine in Jordan in 1982 there were only three family medicine practitioners in the Kingdom.

Family doctors, he said, provide integrated social, medical and other basic services and offer advice to all members of the same family which they treat as an integrated unit. The also refer patients with special needs to other specialists.

Jordan Medical Association (JMA) President Basem Dajani urged the delegates to issue recommendations that would promote family medicine services in the Arab region.

The delegates, from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates

(UAE), Egypt, Algeria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan are to review 435 papers dealing with family medicine, primary health care services, emergency cases and other topics and will attend two seminars on continued medical education and the future of family medicine.

After the opening session Dr. Bataineh opened an exhibition displaying medical equipment and drugs manufactured by Jordanian and foreign firms.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILMS

*Cinema Film "Papier Moon" at Institute of Culture, Jabel Amman, on Thursday at 8:00 pm.
*Cinema Film "The Daughter" at the American Centre, on Thursday at 8:00 pm.

EUROPE DAY

*Open Day on Europe (presenting books, pamphlets, and films on Europe and European Union) at the Institute of Culture, Jabel Amman, on Thursday.

EXHIBITIONS

*Annual Spring Exhibition at the Jordan River Design Center "New Beginnings" until May 23 (Tel. 6130012).
*Abstract art by Iraqi artist Ahmad Al Shukri at the Phoenix Gallery, Garden Street, until May 15.
*Recent works by Ayad Al Nimer at Dar al Fuqar, Jabel Wehbeh, until May 10.
*Works by Syrian artist Ibtisam Al Ansari at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation, Jabel Amman, until May 10.
*Works by Palestinian artist Nasser Soudani at "Dunya" in Jaffa, at Dar al Fuqar, Jabel Wehbeh, until May 9.
*Gandhi's original photographs from May 5-11 at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Anti-nuclear activists battle German police

DANNENBERG, Germany (R) — German anti-nuclear activists fought pitched battles with police Wednesday in a last-gasp bid to prevent a shipment of nuclear waste from reaching a storage depot in northern Germany.

"It would almost be fitting to use the word 'war' at the moment," a police spokesman in the northern town of Dannenberg said as officers clad in full riot gear used water cannon, tear gas and clubs to clear thousands of enraged protesters.

Several demonstrators were hurt as up to 3,000 tried to block the radioactive cargo from moving some 20 kilometres on a giant truck from a train depot to a medium-term

storage facility in Gorleben, 120 kilometres east of Hanover.

"The situation is very, very serious," a police spokesman said. Protesters erected burning barricades, hurled stones and shot fire-works at officers. Helicopters roared overhead and police dogs snarled at the agitated activists.

"This no longer has anything to do with peaceful protests," the spokesman said.

Protesters nose-to-nose with police lines chanted "no violence," "put your weapons away" and "get lost" as the police column escorted the truck moved forward at walking pace.

The truck, carrying the waste in a hardened container under a blue tarpaulin, stopped briefly where protesters had dug under the road, but was then able to continue.

Activists had already clashed with police in the area Tuesday afternoon after trying to sabotage the railway tracks.

The radioactive waste, which crossed into Germany from France by rail at midday Tuesday, had made its way through most of the country practically unhindered.

The train was the first of around 110 set to carry nuclear waste and fuel back to German reactors over the next eight years.

The waste shipment eluded observers from the environmental group Greenpeace who had staked out the world's largest nuclear reprocessing plant in La Hague in northern France. They had hoped to tip off their German counterparts.

Greenpeace demonstrators kept vigil along the tracks near Gorleben during the night. Other demonstrators sang around campfires in defiance of a ban on protests in the area.

In one of Germany's biggest internal security operations, about 15,000 police and border guards were deployed to protect the waste as it moved north on a flatcar.

The train, with locomotives at each end, had included four cars carrying police and nuclear safety officials.

Despite the tight security, about 30 protesters managed to halt the train briefly by sitting on the tracks near Darmstadt in western Germany Tuesday. They left peacefully at the request of police.

Interior Minister Manfred Kanther instructed border guards and railway police Tuesday not to shy away from using force if needed to prevent militants from vandalising rail lines.

In a statement, he also threatened protesters with the force of the law, saying: "It is unacceptable when howling, masked rioters are not punished after leaving injured police officers at the scene of a crime. This cannot be allowed."



German riot police spray water in an attempt to disperse a group of anti-nuclear protesters blocking the way to the nuclear waste disposal which is expecting a nuclear waste shipment from France Wednesday (Reuters photo)

8 die in new Pakistan terror attack

LAHORE, Pakistan (AFP) — Eight people were killed and around 40 injured when a powerful bomb ripped through a bus near Lahore in Pakistan's third major terrorist attack in a month.

The early morning blast at Sheikhupura, some 25 kilometres west of the Punjab province capital sent a wave of fear across the populous region.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto condemned the "dastardly" attack.

In a statement sent from Sweden, where she is on a visit, Ms. Bhutto vowed to fight the wave of violence that has hit the country.

"The harder terrorists try to terrorise the people and the government, the harder will be the government's resolve to deal with them with an iron hand," she said.

On April 28, a bomb exploded on a bus at Bhai Phero near Lahore, killing 52 people. Six people died on April 14 when a bomb exploded in a charity cancer hospital founded by former cricket hero Imran Khan.

Some 137 people have been killed in seven attacks in the past seven months.

Police said five people were killed instantly in the Sheikhupura blast, two died on the way to hospital and the eighth died in a Lahore hospital. Nineteen of the injured were listed in "critical" condition.

The official Associated Press of Pakistan news agency, which first reported nine killed, later said there were six dead and 36 injured.

There was an ear-splitting explosion soon after the bus, coming from the nearby rice market town of Hafizabad, stopped in front of the Civil Hospital, witnesses said.

The bomb was apparently planted under a seat in the bus, a police official told AFP. "There was a big bang and the rear of the bus was on fire," a Sheikhupura resident said.

Amjad Butt, a rice exporter said "I saw some people trying to jump out of the windows and a majority of passengers managed to come out of the blazing bus."

Local shopkeepers rushed to join the rescue operation, but panic gripped the area and victims' limbs were scattered over the site, witnesses said.

As ambulances removed the casualties, police cordoned off the area so bomb experts could start an investigation.

Nobody claimed responsibility for the blast. However, Malik Mushtaq Awan, the Punjab senior minister, implicitly accused India. He said "a foreign hand is involved in such terrorist activities."

"No one but our enemy can commit such a barbarian act," said Mr. Awan who is also provincial chief of the ruling Pakistan People's Party.

In Islamabad, a senior police official said it was blast "sponsored" by the Indian intelligence, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).

Ms. Bhutto had blamed the April blast on raw, but India denied this.

Imran Khan said he suspected government security agencies could be behind the explosion at his hospital, and requested the Supreme Court start an investigation.

News reports Tuesday quoted Punjab Chief Minister Arif Nakai as saying intelligence agencies had arrested suspects in the two blasts in April, but he declined to identify them apart from saying they were "raw agents."

The previous bus blast in Punjab coincided with a similar explosion near New Delhi in which 15 people were reported killed.

"The Indians may have sent a signal to Pakistan that if you play this game we are capable of retaliating on your territory," a Western diplomat said at that time.

Pakistan has seen a series of bomb blasts since late last year.

The Egyptian embassy in Islamabad was destroyed by a car bomb in November killing 17 people. Responsibility was claimed by three Muslim groups in Egypt.

In December a car bomb in the north-western city of Peshawar left 45 dead.

'Tigers abandoned by Jaffna people'

COLOMBO (R) — Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte told parliament Wednesday that Sri Lankans living in the war-torn Jaffna peninsula have abandoned the Tamil rebels who claimed to be their leaders for more than a decade.

Gen. Ratwatte said more than 200,000 minority Tamils had moved to areas controlled by the army, and the three-week government offensive had driven many rebels from their northern stronghold.

"The only group that continues with the call for separation has been repudiated by the people," Gen. Ratwatte said. "In other words, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been beaten both militarily and politically."

A leading Tamil politician Wednesday welcomed the military's success in the north, but said it was time now to replace it with a political process.

"We welcome the (military) operation, which has almost been completed without much damage to civilian life and property," said Douglas Devananda, leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party that has nine seats in Sri Lanka's 225-seat parliament.

"But we feel this must be followed immediately by an interim civilian administration before a political vacuum sets in," Mr. Devananda told Reuters.

The armed forces launched its assault on the rebel bastion late last year and in December took control of Jaffna town, the centre of the Tigers' would-be Tamil homeland.

The military's current offensive is aimed at securing other parts of the heavily-populated peninsula, where the LTTE had its own police force and operated its own banks.

The Tigers have since regrouped on the mainland south of the peninsula and have launched a series of attacks on military and government targets to destabilise the island's east.

"Our forces have now taken control of a large portion of the Tenmaradchi and Vadamarachchi areas (of the peninsula)," Gen. Ratwatte said.

He said the government was helping displaced people to rebuild their homes.

U.S. House passes anti-crime bill

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Mindful of an electorate alarmed by crime, the U.S. House of Representatives has passed several new laws against crime, including one requiring police to release the names of sex offenders to the communities in which they live.

That bill is known as Megan's Law after seven-year-old Megan Kanka was raped and murdered two years ago, allegedly by a twice-convicted sex offender who lived across the street from her New Jersey home.

The bill, part of a Republican anti-crime offensive, was adopted in a 418-0 vote Tuesday.

The House of Representatives also passed several other crime bills, some of which generated a degree of skepticism.

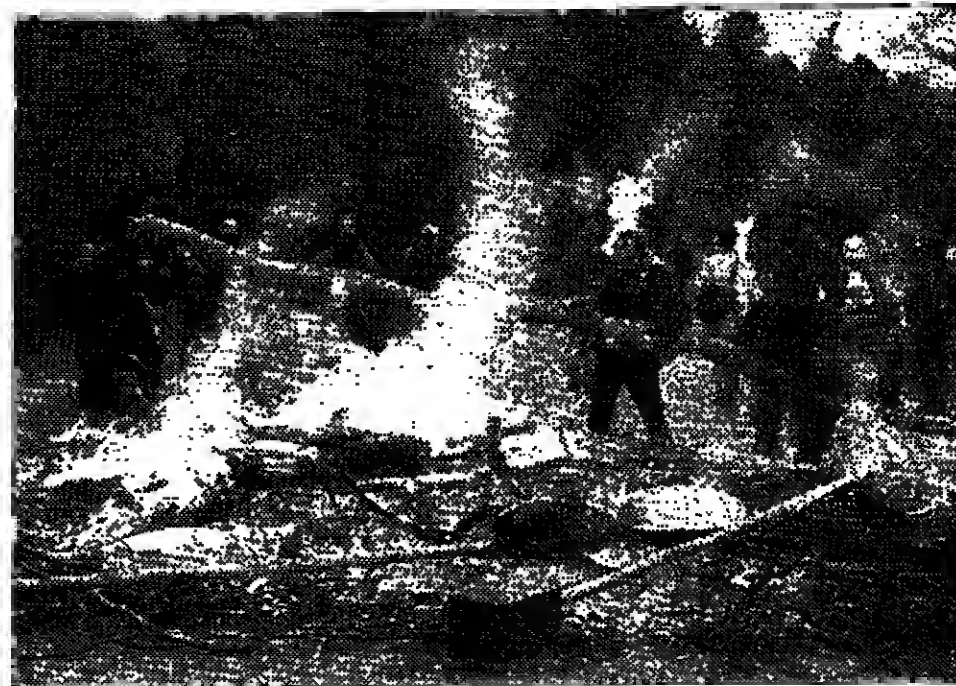
One bill makes it a federal crime for anyone to stalk someone across a state line or in a federal jurisdiction, such as a military base or a national park.

Another bill would increase sentences for federal violent crimes against children aged 14 and younger and elderly people aged 65 and older.

And an amendment to that bill, which passed on a voice vote, would make the second conviction of a sexual crime against a child a federal offense.

Not to be outdone, a New York state representative, Democrat Louise Slaughter, then offered an amendment expanding that to cover the second sexual crimes against anyone — man or woman, adult or child. Her amendment, which was approved, also would give prosecutors the option to seek a sentence of life imprisonment without parole for the repeat sexual offender.

The bill to increase penalties for crimes against the young and old would direct the U.S. sentencing commission to add years to sentences for violent crimes against those vulnerable people.



Anti-nuclear demonstrators burn down a barricade to block the way to the nuclear waste disposal Gorleben which has to be used by a nuclear waste transport which arrived from France Wednesday. German anti-nuclear activists fought pitched battles with police Wednesday in a last-gasp bid to prevent a shipment of nuclear waste from reaching a storage depot in northern Germany (Reuters photo)

S. African assembly adopts permanent constitution

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa's Constitutional Assembly adopted Wednesday a permanent post-apartheid constitution, agreed in a last-minute deal which rescued the country from a divisive national referendum.

The 490-member Constitutional Assembly, which comprises both houses of parliament, voted to adopt a permanent post-apartheid constitution with an overwhelming majority.

The deputy chairman of the assembly, Leon Wessels, said 420 members voted in favour of the new constitution but agreed to repeat the electronic ballot to properly record the abstention of the white separatist Freedom Front.

"The result is beyond question," he said.

The new law will replace a transitional constitution that came into force after all-race elections in April 1994 that hurried apartheid and brought President Nelson Mandela and his African National Congress (ANC) to power.

The National Party that ran apartheid and now serves in the national unity government and the ANC reached an 11th-hour agreement Tuesday night after the NP objected to ANC clauses on education, property and employer lock-outs.

Earlier, Constitutional Assembly Chairman Cyril Ramaphosa hailed the 140-page constitution as a triumph for the nation and the legislators who drafted it over the past two years.

"Through this constitution we hope to transform our society from one that is based on injustice and strife to one based on justice and peace."

"It is good for investors and it is also good for the land, this constitution," said Mr. Ramaphosa.

Deputy President F.W. de Klerk, whose white-led National Party (NP) withheld its support until the early hours of Wednesday, said the constitution was a flawed document.



A well-wisher greets President Nelson Mandela (left) as he arrives with Constitutional Assembly chairman Cyril Ramaphosa (right) for an Assembly photo session Wednesday (Reuters photo)

Former officer admits love for Diana

LONDON (R) — A former British army officer who claims he had a five-year affair with Princess Diana was quoted Wednesday as saying they had been desperately in love and fantasised about a life together.

Ex-cavalry Captain James Hewitt, the man with whom Princess Diana admitted adultery, said he never intended to fall in love with the wife of Britain's future king, the Sun newspaper reported.

Quoting from a transcript of a 38-minute television interview with Capt. Hewitt that will be screened worldwide next week, the tabloid said their feelings were mutual.

"What we had was very, very special," said Capt. Hewitt. "Diana's love is all encompassing and fulfilling and I was greatly privileged to be on the receiving end of that."

Princess Diana is currently involved in divorce proceedings with her estranged husband Prince Charles.

Capt. Hewitt said his friendship with the princess began in 1985 when he agreed to give her riding lessons and it developed into a romance after a candlelit dinner at her London home a year later after her marriage

had broken down.

"We spoke a great deal about what the future may hold for us both," he said.

"I think it was perhaps fun to fantasise and to believe in a situation which quite clearly might not be possible...The dreams of being able to spend the rest of our lives together."

Capt. Hewitt, 38, who was reported to be set to make £1 million (\$1.5 million) from the programme, said he agreed to the documentary to give his side of the story after Princess Diana admitted their adulterous affair in a television interview last year.

He said the princess was emotionally vulnerable and distressed when they met and had tried desperately to save her marriage.

She spoke openly about Prince Charles's relationship with his long-time love Camilla Parker Bowles and said she felt she was unable to give her husband the love that he wanted.

Although Capt. Hewitt gives little detail about the physical aspects of his relationship with the princess, the interview is bound to cause more embarrassment for Britain's royal family.

U.S. firm plans renovation of Vietnam cinemas

HANOI (AFP) — A U.S. company has signed a deal to renovate several crumbling Vietnamese cinemas and build new multiplex centres that will show American movies, a report said Tuesday. Vision Net International (VNI) is still waiting for official approval for the deal signed with state movie distribution company FAFIM to renovate cinemas in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Danang, a publication of the Vietnam News Agency said. VNI is to build 20 multiplex cinemas with up to four screens, each with a capacity of up to 300 people, the agency quoted VNI official Raymond Clin as saying. The number of cinemas has declined dramatically in recent years. In 1993, the country still had around 300 cinemas. Now owners have rushed to convert them to karaoke or restaurants, leaving just 70 cinemas. Hanoi now has only two for its three million people. VNI has also signed a deal to bring 20-30 movies to Vietnam each year to be shown in the new cinemas. FAFIM, a state firm known for its conservatism, will maintain control over which films are chosen for release. Most cinemas only show Vietnamese films which have lost out in popularity in recent years to imported movies from Hong Kong watched at home or shown in street-side video bars. Several U.S. films, including the Arnold Schwarzenegger action movie True Lies, have been screened at local cinemas over the past year.

Gun-toting granny charged with attempted robbery

LOS ANGELES (R) — A 71-year-old grandmother, who allegedly tried to hold up a petrol station with a gun because of mounting financial troubles, was charged with attempted robbery. Deputy District Attorney David Demerjian said Mary Ruth Blanco drove to the service station in suburban West Covina early Saturday, approached the lone attendant, who was in a bulletproof glass booth, brandished a 32-calibre pistol and demanded money. When she saw the attendant dialing the police emergency number she fled in her truck. Ms. Blanco faces a maximum sentence of 13 years in prison if convicted of one count of second-degree attempted robbery. She is being held on \$60,000 bail.

To really burn calories, work the treadmill — study

CHICAGO (R) — Forget the stair-steppers, rowing machines and bicycles — it's the treadmill that really burns calories at the spa. Researchers at the Medical College of Wisconsin and the Veterans Affairs Medical Centre in Milwaukee said the treadmill is the most efficient device, burning off 40 per cent more calories than other workout machines studied. "The treadmill machine induced higher rates of energy expenditure and aerobic demands than the other exercise machines examined," it said.

Wedding video catches kiss of death for woman

BANGKOK (R) — A Thai man killed his wife after he saw another man giving her a kiss in a video tape of a relative's wedding, police said. The 29-year-old man was arrested in Bangkok Tuesday and later confessed that he had become enraged and stabbed his wife to death after watching the family video, police said. The man told police he lost his temper after his wife refused to reveal the identity of the man seen giving her the kiss, police said.



Soldiers with Charles Taylor's NPFL walk past the headless body of an enemy soldier captured when wounded and then decapitated during heavy fighting in downtown Monrovia (Reuters photo)

Gunbattle reported on key bridge in Liberian capital

MONROVIA (AFP) — Factional fighters in Monrovia battled over a key bridge Wednesday morning but the rest of the Liberian capital was reported to be calm.

Ethnic Krahn forces of the United Liberation Movement (ULIMO-J) and fighters of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia — considered by its leader Charles Taylor to be government troops — fought for territory on Johnson Bridge, which links the city centre with Vai Town, an area that gives access to a parallel bridge, witnesses contacted by telephone reported.

Most parts of Monrovia were quiet, however as a ceasefire first called April 19, broken nine days later and reimposed Monday, seemed to have taken hold.

In the diplomatic enclave of Mamba Point, residents moved freely to fetch food and water or to visit friends and family hitherto unreachable because of the clashes.

Although most Monrovia residents are hoping a solution to a crisis ignited by the attempted arrest a month ago of key faction leader "General" Roosevelt Johnson, will be found by regional heads of state meeting Wednesday in Accra, tension remained high.

Armed youths — few factional militiamen are beyond their twenties — still roamed the streets, sometimes taunting and shouting obscenities at members of opposed factions.

An argument between two NPFL fighters in Mamba Point hovered on the edge of catastrophe as one of those involved, a boy of no more than 12, pulled a hand grenade from his pocket and held it to the face of the other, his finger on the pin.

"I'll pull it out, man. You shut up or I'll pull it out," he shouted.

Asked if he hoped the ceasefire would hold, one NPFL commander told AFP: "If there was anything I could hope for it would be an end to this war."

Nearby, a non-combatant, 23-year-old Grace Jalloh echoed this view. "This has gone on too long. The war has to stop now. People have had enough," he said, adding the best way for this to be achieved would be for African peacekeeping force, ECOMOG, to be deployed across the city and for U.S. Marines, currently stationed at the American embassy in Mamba Point, to be deployed alongside them.

"These fighters don't always have respect for ECOMOG. But with the American soldiers it's a different story."

Diplomats here say there are no plans for the Marines to leave the embassy compound.

Corpses, some headless, have yet to be cleared from the area around Barclay Training Centre, a barracks that has been at the heart of much of the clashes.



Rebels with Charles Taylor's NPFL gesture with their guns at the severed head of an enemy soldier captured while wounded in fighting. Despite a ceasefire which went into effect Tuesday, clashes between rival militias continued (Reuters photo)

Hung parliament seen as India vote count starts

NEW DELHI (R) — Counting began Wednesday in India's general elections, with an exit poll pointing the way to a hung parliament and defeat for Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress Party.

First results in the 347 constituencies being counted Wednesday were not expected for several hours.

Counting was due to start in at least another 183 constituencies Thursday morning and a clear picture of the state of the parties was likely by the weekend.

Electoral officials said more than 50 per cent of India's 590 million voters took part in balloting over three days for all but six of India's 543 parliamentary constituencies.

An exit poll on state television after voting ended Tuesday night predicted a hung parliament, with the ruling Congress and its allies in second place with around 142 seats.

The exit poll predicted the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would get 192 seats and emerge the biggest party, but well short of the 273 needed for an overall majority.

Polls during the campaign had predicted a similar result.

The BJP and its allies held 128 seats going into the elections, while Congress and its partners had 274.

The perceived anti-Muslim bias of the BJP is likely to make it difficult for the party to attract support from other more secular parties in parliament.

Also, it remains unclear whether the BJP would seek to form a government if it won under 200 seats.

BJP President Lal Krishna Advani told state television Tuesday night he expected the party to win around 215 seats.

"We haven't decided how we will form the government, but we hope to get enough support," he said.

Tuesday's exit poll said the National Front-Left Front (NF-LF), a loose alliance of centre-left and Communist parties, would win 134 seats, with regional parties taking 67.

Analysts believe the most likely outcome of the vote will be a coalition between part or all of Congress and the NF-LF.

The exit poll, conducted for state television by the independent New Delhi-based Centre for Study of Developing Societies, questioned 17,000 voters in 120 constituencies and had a margin of error of five to 10 per cent.

A Congress showing of under 150 seats would be the worst ever for the party that has ruled India for all but four years since independence in 1947. It won 154 seats in the 1977 elections that swept Indira Gandhi out of power.

If the election result is in line with the exit poll, it is expected to spark a challenge to Mr. Rao's leadership of the party, encouraged by defectors who have said they will return to Congress if it ditches Mr. Rao.

Mr. Rao's rivals in Congress have been visiting Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born widow of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and head of the Nehru-Gandhi family dynasty that has led the party for most of its post-independence history.

She is likely to play a decisive role in any party leadership battle.

Mr. Rao's departure has also been encouraged by NF-LF leaders, who have said they are prepared to form a coalition with Congress if he quits as leader.

Such a coalition would be likely to keep in place the radical economic reforms that Mr. Rao has introduced since 1991, opening India's door to foreign trade and investment, but slow their pace of development.

Russians face stalemate in Chechenya guerrilla war

VEDENO, Russia (AFP) — The 17-month conflict in Chechenya has broken up into a guerrilla war with few stable frontlines and neither the Russians nor the Chechen rebels looking close to outright victory.

The closest thing to a frontline is the Caucasus foothills, where the lightly armed Chechens can use the terrain to their advantage against Russian armoured columns and air raids. But even this frontline is increasingly unpredictable.

Last week, Russian forces pulled their tanks and thousands of troops out of Vedeno and Dargo in southeastern Chechenya, less than three weeks after having captured them.

The troops withdrew down the hills to Tsa Vedeno, leaving the higher villages — from Dargo to Mekhketi — in Chechen hands.

As soon as the Russians left Vedeno the Chechen fighters, driving captured Russian jeeps, and armed with Russian-made rocket launchers and rifles, moved in.

On Tuesday, the ruined, deserted village of Goiskoye in the south-central foothills was finally captured by the Russians after three hours of saturation shelling.

In the southwest, Chechens still hold out in Bamut, another totally destroyed village, reportedly thanks to the bunkers of a disused Soviet nuclear missile base.

The neighbouring villages of Orekhovo and Stary Akhkol, which have been held by the Chechens more than a year, are now a no-man's-land, razed to the ground, littered with mines and often changing hands, according to Chechen fighters.

Deeper south in the mountains, the Chechens have created bases that are virtually immune to ground attack due to the steepness of the hills and thickness of the forests.

However, like every other Chechen position, these places are open to Russian long-range artillery and aerial bombing and the Chechens rely on their network of trenches to survive.

In the plains the Russians claim full control, saying they have pushed what they call "the handits" into the hills for good.

But in reality the situation is just as fluid.

At night Chechen rebels move about with the help of local guides around the Russian positions between the mountains and the capital Grozny.

Every village has rebel supporters who feed, shelter and arm the fighters. Likewise, hospitals in the plains give help to wounded fighters.

Akhmed, rebel commander of a small village just 20 kilometres from Grozny, said he could call on 100 men for behind-the-lines attacks whenever he needed them.

The rebels' new emphasis on partisan tactics has already resulted in major losses for the Russians over the last month.

An entire armoured column was wiped out in the south-central Shatoi area, with the loss of more than 50 Russian troops.

Another Russian column was destroyed in the Vedeno Valley, according to rebel commanders.

Shamil Basayev, the most daring and influential of the guerrilla commanders, said last week that his men were stepping up behind-the-lines attacks.

Last week the rebels fired Grad rockets at the Russian air base in Grozny.

With the Russian presidential elections looming on June 16, there are signs that the Russians are trying to avoid embarrassing major confrontations.

A battle in the southeastern plains town of Shali, home to about 40,000 people, was narrowly averted over the weekend.

In what appeared to be a major compromise on both sides, encircling Russian troops moved into the town without opposition, but then did nothing to arrest and disarm the numerous fighters hidden there, witnesses said.

Commander Basayev had threatened to bring in fighters from the hills south of Shali and attack the Russians from the rear if they used force.

Tin Guldinann, head of the Grozny-based delegation of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), said: "It was a smooth operation in a dangerous situation."

However, a helicopter attack Tuesday on a crowded market place in the plains town of Urus-Martan and other daily attacks on civilians suggest that the Russian generals are far from adopting a new humane policy in Chechenya.

Meanwhile, Commander Basayev and other Chechen commanders are determined to keep fighting until they drive Russian troops out, whatever the cost.

There is widespread support among fighters for Commander Basayev's plans to carry the war into Russia proper, even using terrorist tactics.

Commander Basayev led a mass hostage-taking raid on the southern Russian town of Budennovsk last June in which some 150 people died.

Azerbaijan ready for PoW swap with Armenia

MOSCOW (AFP) — Azerbaijan told Russia Wednesday it was ready to hand over to Armenia 39 prisoners in exchange for a group of Azerbaijanis captured in the conflict over the mountain enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Azerbaijani President Geidar Aliyev told Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov that Baku had a list of 39 "ethnic Armenian prisoners-of-war, hostages and convicted criminals whom we are ready to hand over to you for transfer to Armenia," the Azerbaijani news agency Turan reported.

Mr. Primakov described the Azerbaijani move as "a great humanitarian step" and promised that he would return to Baku Friday with 69 Azerbaijanis held by Armenia, Turan reported.

Earlier Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Gasan Gasanov told Turan that Baku had lists showing more than 850 PoWs were held by Armenia.

On Friday the Azerbaijani Supreme Court sentenced to death two men for causing a bomb blast in the Baku Metro in March 1994 which killed 14 people.

A second bombing in the metro four months later killed seven people.

Mr. Primakov was due to travel to the Armenian capital Yerevan later Wednesday for talks with Armenian leaders, returning to Baku Friday, Turan reported.

On April 21 Mr. Aliyev and Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrossian said they had agreed to extend a ceasefire, step up peace talks and free all PoWs, following summit talks in Luxembourg.

The agreement injected a note of optimism into four years of largely fruitless on-and-off negotiations over Nagorno-Karabakh, which is situated in Azerbaijan but populated mostly by ethnic Armenians.

Armenia proper has pushed for outright secession, or at least political autonomy for the enclave, and backed its separatist bid militarily.

Azerbaijan meanwhile has refused to let the western territory go.

The Karabakh Armenians now control the enclave and a small portion of Azeri territory.

The issue has bitterly divided Armenians and Azeris since Karabakh Armenians backed by Yerevan, the Armenian capital, launched a secessionist bid in 1988, setting off a six-year war that has left more than 20,000 dead and 500,000 displaced.

Interfax News Agency quoted officials in Nagorno-Karabakh as saying the authorities in the enclave were expected to free a group of Azerbaijani PoWs before Mr. Primakov arrived in the territory's capital Stepunakert Thursday.

EU anxiously seeks stronger foreign policy voice

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Union, embarrassed by high-profile foreign policy failures from Bosnia to Beirut, is seeking ways of speaking with a single voice in diplomacy and finding that majority rule may be the way.

Officials from the 15-nation bloc say that most EU countries are coming around to a previously-taboo notion that individual EU countries should not be allowed to veto foreign policy decisions backed by most of the others.

Only Britain and Greece remain vehemently opposed to such a watering down of national rights. EU officials said following the bloc's latest round of treaty negotiating this week.

"The vast majority of countries recognise the need to (find ways) that will allow us to avoid the limitations of unanimity," Italy's Silvio Fagiolo said.

Mr. Fagiolo is chairman of a group of EU foreign ministers' representatives who currently meet once a week to negotiate changes to the EU's treaty as part of the bloc's so-called inter-governmental conference on its future.

Britain is opposed on principle to any reduction in national rights. Greece, eyes firmly fixed on arch-rival Turkey, is loath to give up its power to veto EU actions concerning Ankara.

But well-publicised foreign policy failures by the EU have apparently turned other bloc members towards some sort of decision-making system that would allow a majority of countries to carry the day.

"Despite its economic weight and its role as the number one aid donor, the union doesn't really have much weight in crisis management," German Secretary of State Werner Hoyer said.

The EU has been stung by a constant inability to agree on what to do in foreign affairs and then to carry it out.

Most notable among the failures was the bloc's struggle to prevent or end the war in next-door Yugoslavia despite the appointment of a peace negotiator and the deployment of peacekeeping troops from EU states under United Nations control.

The United States, to the chagrin of the Europeans, stepped in to broker a peace deal after spending years on the sidelines.

More recently, Washington made the running in stopping fighting between Israel and Hizbollah guerrillas in Lebanon. Efforts by France, acting unilaterally, and EU president Italy to get involved were criticised in some quarters as threatening to detract from the main negotiations.

Within its own house, the bloc was also faulted for "sleeping through the night" when EU member Greece and fellow NATO member Turkey came close to blows over a disputed island.

Such confusions in diplomacy have led for calls within the EU for a single person — someone the world can ring in crisis — to coordinate the bloc's joint foreign policy.

Paris has urged a high-level, high-profile appointment to be made and for that person to report directly to EU leaders.

But EU officials said after this week's negotiations that the bloc's 14 other members were cool to the idea.

"This gentleman would confuse everything — the world, the presidency, the European Commission and the member states," one diplomat said.

The appointment of a senior bureaucrat, reporting to the EU's 15 foreign ministers, was a more likely outcome, they said.

Winnie Mandela involved in abduction, murder, Truth Commission hears

DURBAN, South Africa (AFP) — President Nelson Mandela's ex-wife Winnie was named Wednesday in connection with the abduction and murder of a teenaged political activist in 1989 by a witness at the truth and reconciliation commission public hearings here.

Joyce Seipei told how her 14-year-old son Stompie was taken from a church mission by a gang associated with (Mrs.) Mandela and held at Mrs. Mandela's home in the sprawling black township of Soweto near Johannesburg.

She recalled how two well-known clerics, brought her the grim news through the township grapevine that the gang, known as the "Mandela Football Club," had then beaten her son to death.

Mrs. Seipei said that even after she had identified Stompie's body, Mrs. Mandela's supporters in the township claimed that he was still alive.

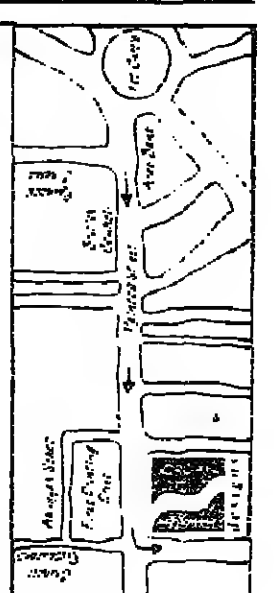
"I was very hurt when people kept saying that it (the body) was not my child ... but I am his mother and I knew it was him," Mrs. Seipei said.

Stompie, a member of the internal wing of Mr. Mandela's then-banned African National Congress, had two years before his death become the youngest anti-apartheid activist in police detention when he was held at the age of 12.



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UNRWA — where to?

UNTIL a comprehensive and permanent political solution to the Palestine refugee problem is reached, the focus of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) should remain on the purpose for which it was created: providing humanitarian and economic assistance to the refugees in their host countries. That is a task which has been becoming more difficult due to the increasing number of refugees, the tumultuous political developments since 1948 and the ever decreasing value of donations relative to the growing UNRWA budget.

While it is the responsibility of the donor nations to honour their legal and financial commitments to UNRWA and its operations so that it meets its obligations, it is the duty of the agency itself to ensure the most effective utilisation of its resources. Its decisions should be geared towards fulfilling its mandate and not tailored to suit the inner considerations and priorities of the United Nations. If the choice is between political expediency and practicality, UNRWA should opt for the latter.

That, however, did not happen when UNRWA decided to move its external relations to Gaza. Nor will the decision by the donor countries to entrust their embassies in Tel Aviv with the responsibility of UNRWA affairs help the agency carry out its duties, as His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan aptly pointed out in his speech to the agency's informal meeting of the major donor and host countries in Amman yesterday.

Needless to say that the refugee problem can only be solved through a comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. That settlement is not with us yet. However, and until it materialises the direct concerns and needs of the refugees and their host countries should continue to be UNRWA's top priority. That would mean the participation of all host countries in the agency's meetings and decision-making process.

Political circumstances do not — yet — allow for the participation of Syria and Lebanon, two of UNRWA's five fields of operation, in any meetings that will be held in Gaza. The closure of the Palestinian self-rule areas, which has been the norm rather than the exception since the Palestinian National Authority took control of them, will make the convening of donor meetings there problematic, to say the least. Making UNRWA's affairs the responsibility of the donor countries' embassies in Israel will only lead to logistical and political problems that neither UNRWA nor the donor nations need.

This means that the meetings will have to be held elsewhere, which actually makes a country like Jordan the natural venue for UNRWA to base its operations.

It is Jordan's deep concern for refugees that has led it to point to the worrying consequences of these decisions by UNRWA and the major donor nations. The Kingdom hosts over 40 per cent of the overall refugee population. The living conditions of those refugees are far better than those of refugees in any other host country. In Jordan, refugees, who have full citizenship, enjoy the right to employment, schooling and business among others. The government's contributions to refugees, by UNRWA's own estimates, amount to \$300 million per year, which is almost equivalent to UNRWA's annual budget of \$320 million.

The Kingdom has earmarked this amount to refugees at a time when it is under severe economic pressure to cut down its public expenditure. That speaks for the commitment of the Kingdom to and concern for the well-being of the Palestinian refugees until an equitable solution to their problem is found.

So when Jordan contributes its ideas on how better to facilitate the work of UNRWA, it speaks with a history of unparalleled success in dealing with the refugees problem and a demonstrated record of serving their interests. Its words are thus worth listening to — for the sake of refugees and their future.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily said Wednesday that Jordan and Egypt have a good opportunity to initiate and promote the concept of regional cooperation and achieve further development now that both countries are enjoying the Middle East peace and are oriented towards free market and open trade between themselves and the world at large. Success that would be achieved at the present meetings of the higher joint committee is bound to pave the ground for a successful summit between King Hussein and President Mubarak, and identity of views on political, economic and other issues will help both countries pursue joint endeavours towards further successes at the bilateral and regional levels, said the paper. The statements of the two prime ministers at the start of the higher committee meetings reflected the determination of Amman and Cairo to move ahead with plans to integrate their economies and to search for ways to reestablish solidarity among Arab states, added the paper. It said that as the two countries strive to attain comprehensive peace and help the Palestinians regain their full rights in their homeland, they are also moving ahead with efforts to fulfil the ultimate aspirations of the Arab Nation.

The View from Academia

Thesis exams, kenafa and press coverage

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

THERE IS something seriously wrong with the way our Arabic newspapers and magazines tackle many of the issues which are of concern to our largely innocent, uninformed, hearsay-prone, and gossip-swallowing public. During these particularly critical times in the history of the Arab Nation, we are in dire need of serious dialogue and intelligent debate, and our press is, naturally, expected to take an active part in making available facts, opinions and counter-opinions, and pros and cons. What we want is investigative reporting and thorough, efficient coverage. So far, this is not happening much.

The other day I read in one of our local newspapers the following item, composed of two paragraphs and entitled "The University Prevents Families and Relatives," which I am translating in full:

"The University of Jordan administration has recently taken a decision preventing the families and relatives of graduate students from attending the sessions of the thesis defence exam in order to maintain a quiet atmosphere during the defence sessions!!"

We pose a question here: Have the families and relatives become a source of annoyance for their children and an obstacle in the way of their obtaining a master's or a Ph.D. degree, when they (the parents) are in fact awaiting this particular day anxiously? Or, is there something else on the mind of the university?

One does not know what to say when one reads such an item, and a hundred others, of which our dailies and weeklies are full. Surely, this is bad journalism. For one thing, it is bad because one does not know (frankly) what to call this item? Is it a news item? A report? A feature story? A piece of gossip? For another, it is bad because it is unhelpful, uninformative and uninteresting. What exactly is the item trying to tell the reader? What fact or facts is the item conveying? Undeniably, the issue is an important one, and the decision on part of the university may be somewhat controversial.

However, why do we not have the complete story here? Should not the item have included, like any good coverage of any news item or feature story should, the university's explanation and rationale, the students' opinions, and the reaction of the parents and relatives concerned? Third, it is bad in the sense that the item is ultimately subversive, or is meant to be so. The last rhetorical question ("Or, is there something else on the mind of the university?") intends to give the impression that the university has adopted the decision for an evil purpose. There is a "conspiracy" somewhere, just as there are conspiracies behind every-

thing that happens in the Middle East today.

I happen to be well-acquainted with the rationale, debates and background of the decision, and here is briefly what went on "in the university's mind" when it decided to recommend to graduate students not to bring their parents and relatives with them to the final thesis defence.

The thesis defence is essentially (or is supposed to be) a serious academic event and not a social gathering. What happens on many of these occasions? The parents and relatives come to the discussion hall in exactly the same guise and manner they come to an engagement or wedding party. Most of them, who have obviously gone through the trouble of visiting the barber or hairdresser earlier that morning and put on their best suits (dressed to kill, as it were), bring with them chocolate, kenafa, soft drinks, bottles of mineral water, napkins and Arabic coffee. More recently, many students, eager to immortalise the happy moment, have either entrusted their dear relatives or hired professional photographers to take pictures and record the event on tape. A colleague of mine whispered to me at a defence I took part in a couple of years ago: "They have thought of everything except the full buffet, the band, the singer, and the belly-dancer."

This is ridiculous. We may understand our society's urge to be creative in engagement and wedding parties, through the latest and most fashionable in the world of rites, rituals, and other whimsical forms of entertainment. Academic events, however, can do without our society's creative touches. Over the years, the thesis-defence events, due to creative touches imported from some fraternal Arab countries famed for such things, have deteriorated remarkably. We, of course, have added our own local touches.

But the matter is more than ridiculous or ludicrous. Two points, in particular, have bothered the university (and indeed most of those involved in the event): first, the occasion is often unpleasant and, even, psychologically detrimental to the parents and relatives themselves. They come with the intention of enjoying the event and with either false or uninformed expectations, and they are often disappointed. The thesis defence is considered a serious exam at our universities. The defence is not merely a formality (as in the case of some institutions abroad in which the defence committee is the committee which has supervised the thesis from its earliest stages), but an actual test. The committee members are examiners who have looked at the thesis for the first time and come to quiz the student about it. In theory, a student may fail — though in practice

he rarely does. As many of our students have not had a thorough training in the art of writing, as they lack access to rich research libraries, as many of them do not devote to the thesis the amount of time it requires and submit it hastily, and as the exam is vigorous and meticulous, the experience is often unpleasant and even trying — to both students and parents.

In the event I referred to above, when one of our colleagues started his cross examination of the student, the student's father commenced smoking one cigarette after the other (after he had signalled to the video photographer to stop shooting), stood up angrily and left the room. I have taken part in defence exams for the past twelve years, and in many of them I have seen parents and relatives suffer, and this is a serious matter.

But the university is also concerned about the feelings of the examiners themselves, the integrity of the experience, and the quality of the thesis. Several people have expressed the opinion that as examiners, they often find themselves unable to do their job properly. How can you discuss matters seriously, comfortably and objectively under the pressure of cameras, baklava boxes waiting to be opened and parents either eyeing you angrily or looking somewhat disappointed or even embarrassed and heart-broken? The committee members are greatly inhibited.

We know of course that some of our students perform well, that some of their parents understand and even appreciate what goes on, that not all parents and relatives bring kenafa, and that not many parents and relatives care to come anymore. We also understand that many parents may feel it is their right to come, and that the university's decision is controversial.

What I have said, however, applies to the majority of cases, and I am of the opinion that, as things stand, parents and relatives should be strongly discouraged from attending — unless they know exactly what they may be getting into. Besides, at many universities I know, the defence is attended only by the concerned student and the committee, and the defence is not publicised. Furthermore, if parents want to be happy, they can host a party for their happy son or daughter after the event (at home or in a restaurant) and celebrate the way they see fit. They can even bring a belly dancer, if they want to.

This is what the university has "on its mind" and nothing else.

Baring a barefaced lie

By Godfrey Jansen

TRAPPED BY the incontrovertible fact of the coffins containing the corpses of 101 Lebanese civilians killed by Israeli artillery, a fact broadcast for all the world to see by satellite television, Israel has fallen back on its traditional first line of defence — the Big Lie (as Hitler's informants said: "If you want your lie to be believed tell a big lie"). A line of defence used by Israeli spokesmen before, during and after all of Israel's wars of aggression against the Arabs.

Thus, no less a person than Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres facing an international press conference could say: "We did not know" there were civilians in the Cana camp, because "the U.N. did not tell us."

That is not one but two barefaced lies. Because 49 hours before the shelling, a U.N. official had told the Israelis that, in all, there were 6,000 civilians taking refuge in U.N. encampments in south Lebanon. This was admitted by Israel's artillery chief, Brigadier Daniel Harel, who actually said, at the very time Peres was speaking, Israel had been told that there were 5,000-9,000 civilians sheltering in U.N. bases in south Lebanon.

Caught in this lie, Israel has

switched to saying: "But they did not tell us how many people were in each camp." As if knowing the exact number of refugees would have prevented shelling from taking place.

Peres simply ignored the fact that within a minute of the first Israeli shells falling on Cana UNIFIL got in touch directly with Israeli military headquarters and demanded that the gunners stop firing because they were hitting the base sheltering civilian refugees.

Yet it took the Israelis 10-11 minutes thereafter to stop their shooting, during which time scores of people were being decapitated and dismembered by Israel's "proximity fuse" shells which burst overhead and caused more damage than impact shells.

The Israelis have not yet cooked up a story to explain that crucial 10-11 minute delay. But they will.

Peres also claims that Israel launched its bombardment to intercept a Hizbollah group that was shooting mortars at Israeli troops in the occupation zone, therefore Israel was acting in "self-defence."

The Israelis at first said there was no "drone", or unmanned spy aircraft, in the sky above Cana but were forced to change their story when a video showed a drone flying above Cana. Then the Israelis said the "drone" could not "see" into the U.N. camp

because of bad weather, but the same video shows not a cloud in the sky.

The Israelis say that the observer "drone" planes based in Israel are among the best in the world; if the Israeli claim that it did not "see" into the U.N. camp, the Cana "drone" was a bad advertisement for Israel's military industries which account for about 40 per cent of Israel's exports.

The official U.N. report on the massacre, which the U.N. very bravely insisted on publishing despite very strong pressure from Israel and its strategic ally the U.S., was released because the U.N. did not allow itself to be deterred or intimidated by Israel or the U.S.

For having been caught in the act red-handed (red from the blood of innocent victims — including two Lebanese-American citizens sheltering in the compound) it was unbecoming, to say the least, for the guilty to protest against the truth being told. That would have been the height of arrogance.

One cannot but admire the courage of the Arab leaders who sit down to negotiate with someone like Peres who can utter untruths without batting an eyelid. But then the Israelis are very experienced liars.

Who takes the blame for the Cana massacre?

Michael Jansen

THREE DAYS ago Uri Dromi, the Israeli government spokesman, refuted with fiction rather than contradicting fact the allegation contained in a preliminary report on the massacre of April 18 that Israel had "deliberately targeted" a U.N. headquarters at the south Lebanese village of Cana killing more than 100 Lebanese civilians sheltering there.

As this report was due to be presented Monday to the Security Council, it is necessary to examine Dromi's assertion against what the Jordan Times has been able to learn of the truth.

Dromi said that Israel knew its fire had been directed "near a U.N. base" but "we were aiming a couple of hundred metres away, precisely where Katyushas and mortars were fired from just minutes before. Unfortunately two of the shells overshoot and hit the civilians." He insisted that Israel did not know civilians were sheltering in the base.

Dromi relied on fiction in all his assertions. First, Israel's artillery batteries did not direct fire "near" the base only, but also upon the base. Indeed, a leaked section of the still secret U.N. report on the Cana incident, compiled by the secretary general's military adviser, General Frank Van Kappen, said that the Israeli fire had been directed precisely at the entrance of the U.N. camp, in order to ensure casualties among civilians there, particularly the 160-odd who had run in great confusion into the camp just before the Israeli guns opened up.

Israeli gunners did not aim "a couple of hundred metres away" from where Hizbollah guerrillas had fired rockets and mortars "just a few minutes before"; and two Israeli shells did not overshoot the target. There were not two shells, but at least 40 155mm Howitzer shells shot "near" the base. And these shells did not overshoot because the Hizbollah firing position was in a cemetery located a good 300 metres from the U.N. base and directly behind the base. Thus, the Israeli gunners underrode their target. And this happened a full 18 minutes after Hizbollah launched its rockets and mortars.

Finally, Israel was well aware that civilians were staying in the Fijian and other U.N. bases and positions in the U.N. area of operations. This is a traditional practice, whenever shells begin flying in southern Lebanon; a high-ranking U.N. official had told Israel two days before the Cana massacre that at least 5,000 civilians had sought refuge with the U.N. (The Irish contingent alone, at the exposed centre of the U.N. area, had 1,000 under its care, including the children of the Tibetan orphanage). Furthermore, throughout the week of the war pilots Israeli surveillance "drones" were continuously overflying the U.N. zone, providing aerial forward spotting for Israeli gunners. A certain number, perhaps the majority, of these planes are supplied with television equipment which provided Israeli commanders with "real-time" information on what is happening on the ground.

Authoritative sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, revealed to The Jordan Times what happened at Cana on that dreadful day.

It was a "normal day" of "heavy shelling": pilotless Israeli surveillance "drones" circled overhead. U.N. peacekeepers in forward posts kept to their sandbagged bunkers save for the Fijians, whose sector is located north of the Nepalese sector, which abuts on Israel's occupation zone. At noon the Fijians had 600-700 civilians sheltering in the headquarters, a large hilltop compound occupied by the U.N. force since its creation in 1978.

At 13.55 Hizbollah guerrillas fired two Katyusha rockets and eight mortars from the cemetery directly behind the U.N. base.

At 14.13 an Israeli battery of American-manufactured self-propelled artillery opened fire on Cana with two types of shells. Six high explosive impact shells began to fall within the Fijian compound, hitting the prefabricated conference hall where many of the civilians were sheltering.

"Instantly" the Fijians reported they were being shelled and appealed for a halt and assistance. Their call was broadcast over the U.N. communications network linking all the contingents with each other and force headquarters at Nakoura.

At 14.14-15 as Nakoura contacted the Israeli liaison officer to demand and end to the attack the gunners shifted to a second type of shell, a high-explosive "proximity shell" which bursts over the target some seven metres off the ground, inflicting amputation and decapitation wounds on victims. Also, at least 28 additional shells fell around the perimeter of the base, throwing up the earth and slashing the vegetation. None of these shells struck the rails from which Hizbollah guerrillas launched their Katyushas in the cemetery.

At 14.23-25 (bold type) the shelling ceased. (Israel claims it ended at 14.20 but the U.N. rejects this timing.)

At 14.35-40 Israel called a halt to all its bombardments of and air raids against the U.N. zone of operations so that a rescue mission could be mounted and the fire ignited by the shelling of the conference hall be put out.

At 14.45 Commandant Billy Harrington of the Irish contingent told this correspondent by phone from Beirut what had happened. And at 14.47 the spokesman of the United Nations Interim Force, Timor Golsel, told the Jordan Times, again by phone, that there had been "frightening casualties." At least 101 but perhaps 105 and, maybe, 120 dead and many wounded.

Israel's first explanation was that the mortars fired by Hizbollah had endangered an Israeli patrol operating covertly in the neighbourhood and that the barrage was "rapid rescue fire." Then the Israelis tried to say that their gunners had hurried their response to the Hizbollah attack and miscalculated, blaming "human error" for the debacle. But the fact that the Israeli barrage began 18 minutes after the Katyushas were fired and went on for 10-12 minutes disproves these falsifications of the truth.

Defence analysts blame Israel's overdependence on high-tech weapons which cannot be relied on absolutely. If this was the case, the Cana massacre was inevitable due to the high possibility of a technical "glitch".

Some mediocrities and Israelis tried to justify the barrage by claiming that the Hizbollah who actually fired the Katyushas promptly took refuge in the U.N. base. The Jordan Times' authoritative source denies this allegation and the still secret report says only that Hizbollah fighters who had been firing at Israel from near the camp had been running in and out of its "boundary", i.e. the perimeter of the base. But they did not enter the compound itself, the Jordan Times' source insisted. Instead, he said, three known members of Hizbollah — not guerrillas operating in the area — did enter the compound after the shelling began in search of their families. He believed the three were killed.

The Jordan Times was told that the decision to fire was not taken by the men manning Israel's guns but by the officers who provided the battery with the "coordinates" to fix the target. And the U.N. report would seem to blame Israeli commanders for the decision to fix the Cana base as this target.

Blame can be apportioned on two counts: above all, for targeting a base which Israeli commanders knew was packed with refugees, and for shelling the base without first warning the Fijians that this would happen according to the well-established "check system" governing such attacks. In the event Israel felt obliged to return fire directed at an Israeli target from within a U.N. base or position, Israel was obligated to "double check" with U.N. troops at the post to be targeted. According to a U.N. military source, on this occasion Israel did not avail itself of this system. "There was no double check," he stated, before the rounds were loosed off in such devastating effect.

Why then did a commander — or several — decide to target Cana? Frustration. After a week of their "Grapes of Wrath" offensive, the Israeli generals were no nearer their goal of bringing an end to Hizbollah attacks against the occupation zone than they were before launching the operation. Furthermore, in spite of the punishment Israel had inflicted on Lebanon, Beirut was no more ready to disarm and disband Hizbollah, nor to curb its operations, than before the operation.

The Israelis believed their own propaganda. At every possible moment Israeli political and military spokesmen reiterated the claim that Hizbollah was using U.N. bases as "shields" behind which to take shelter while launching rockets at Israel. This claim was in fact false, as a report compiled by the Israelis themselves demonstrated. According to this report, Israel said Hizbollah had fired 300 rockets from the U.N. buffer zone between April 11-18, the day "Grapes of Wrath" was launched and the day of the massacre. But the report went on to say that only 19 of these Katyushas were fired from a 300-metre vicinity of one U.N. position or another. When the Jordan Times put these figures to UNIFIL spokesman Timor Golsel, he said: "Nineteen is not a large number. That's a good record." He also said that it was virtually impossible for U.N. troops to prevent Hizbollah from firing rockets from the vicinity of their posts because many of these posts were on hilltops and the soldiers manning them could not see what was happening below them in the folds of the wadis or behind hillsides.

The commanders must have been very angry when, via their reconnaissance drones, they saw that Hizbollah had indeed fired from a cemetery some 300 metres from the Cana camp. So, believing their own false propaganda, the commander or commanders decided to lash out at the U.N. for this incident.

There are two other less attractive explanations. Either the Israeli army command decided to punish Lebanese civilians, which, Israel accused of sheltering Hizbollah people by targeting Cana, or commanders sought to exact blood vengeance for the 59 civilians killed in recent bombings carried out in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, groups the Israeli military and public believe — falsely — have close ties with the Lebanese Shiite Hizbollah. In fact, Hizbollah condemned the bus bombings. Hizbollah claims it is fighting a war of liberation against the Israeli army in the occupation zone and that Hizbollah guerrillas target civilian areas only in retaliation for Israeli attacks on Lebanese civilians. A claim substantiated by facts not propagandistic distortion.

Frustration among Israel's commanders produced disaster for their operation because their political leadership, until then carried away with enthusiasm for "Grapes of Wrath", was compelled to shut it down after the Cana massacre and sue for a ceasefire before the Israel army had achieved even one of its objectives.

الجزيرة العربية

Society on the Move

The art of communication speaks worlds of diversity

It was leaked, at a dinner hosted by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti for Egyptian Prime Minister Kamal Jazouiri Tuesday evening, that former Minister of Culture and House Deputy Samir Habashneh has decided to abandon his life of unilingualism and is heading for the U.K. for a six-week course in English. Friends have suggested that upon his return he may seek out the top post at the Jordan Times — a position whose occupant is expected to master the language as Mr. Habashneh hope. What this continuing education pursuit will mean for the deputy's future parliamentary career will remain to be seen, that is provided he does choose to run for office again and represent his Karak constituency or become a bilingual minister of culture next time.

RIGHT MAN FOR RIGHTS JOB: Already prolific in English, columnist Waleed Sadi has a new notch on his professional belt. He was elected by the U.N. Economic and Social Council to the U.N. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural rights for a four-year term. Candidates for membership to this committee must be sponsored by your governmental and non-governmental groups and have a significant history of work involving the promotion and protection of human rights. Although lobbying for a seat on the committee is said to be a matter of course, Dr. Sadi, who writes a weekly column for the Jordan Times, had no real difficulty fulfilling the election requirements as he completed a second four-year term as a member of the U.N.'s Geneva-based Human Rights Committee on Civil and

Political Rights in 1995. With his new election, his work will involve human rights promotion in a different context; specifically monitoring the application of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. His involvement in U.N. human rights activities dates back to 1975 when he served as Jordan's representative on the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. Dr. Sadi was elected commission chairman for the 1980-81 term. Since then he has served as a member and as vice-chairman of the U.N. Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities as well as a member of the U.N. Fund for Victims of Torture for eight years. Dr. Sadi, a doctor of jurisprudence from University of Chicago, served also as Jordan's Ambassador to Geneva from 1975 to 1980 and to Ankara (where he met his wife Aisha) from 1982 to 1986. Once editor-in-chief of the Jordan Times, Dr. Sadi may just be the one Mr. Habashneh should consult on his return from brushing up on the "queen's English."

GOING BY THE BOOK: Just arrived in Jordan to attend the plenary session of the Regional Economic Development Working Group of the Multilateral peace talks, is Director of the Mediterranean and Middle East Division at the European Commission Eberhard Rhein. The active and outspoken Dr. Rhein has been considered a long-time friend of Jordan and is making the most of his current visit in getting together with his Jordanian contacts and associates. Coinciding with Dr. Rhein's visit is the anniversary of

Europe Day, and Head of the Delegation of the European Commission in Jordan Yves Gazzo and his wife Nicola will tonight host a reception for the diplomatic corps, officials, and other "friends of Europe" at Philadelphia Hotel. For Dr. Rhein the event may be the last of such receptions in the region in his capacity as a Brussels-based division director at the EC as he is said to be ending his tenure there. But friends and associates here expect no break in relations with the man they describe as a non-mincer of words.

IN SEARCH OF HARMONY: Another highly important group is in Jordan. Representatives of the major donor and host governments of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) are meeting here to discuss the prospect of "harmonizing" the agency's activities and the host nations' activities in view of changes in the region and the nagging budget deficit problem of the agency. This will be the second visit of new UNRWA Commissioner General Peter Hansen to Jordan. Mr. Hansen, who took over the reins of the relief agency from Iler Turkmen early this year, was here in March to speak to the UNRWA staff and look into their demands for salary hikes. Although the agency, which provides educational, health and social services to Palestinian refugees in five host countries including Jordan, has been battling increasing budget woes for several years, Mr. Hansen hosted a reception at the Philadelphia Hotel for participants to the meeting, and senior UNRWA and Jordanian officials Wednesday evening, as is custom-

ary. Perhaps the more social side of the gathering of the donor and host governments will help to alleviate tensions and better yet, loosen some purse-strings.

BRIDGING WORLDS: During Eid Al Adha Jordan was visited by a television team from Chile's Channel 13 headed by Mario Kreutzberger, better known to his millions of viewers in South, Latin and North America, as well as Europe, as "Don Francisco." Kreutzberger has, for the past 30 years, been producer and presenter of "Sabados Gigantes" (giant Saturdays), a four-hour weekly entertainment show popular in the Hispanophone countries. With a 72-hour programme to fill, Mr. Kreutzberger, now based in the U.S. state of Florida, explained that the show includes entertainment of all sorts, a talk show section and several special interest topics presented in three-five-minute documentaries, which is what brought him and his team to Jordan. Hosted by Chilean Ambassador to Jordan Jorge Iglesias at a welcoming dinner, Mr. Kreutzberger, whose parents were concentration camp victims of Nazi Germany, said coming to Jordan was an eye-opener and he was very touched by the hospitality of everyone he and his crew met during their mission here. Meanwhile since accessing the satellite station on which Mr. Kreutzberger's programme appears is highly unlikely here in Jordan at present, we will just have to wait for whatever reviews we receive from across the Atlantic.

Jennifer Hamarneh

Japanese women no longer silent on harassment

By Linda Sieg
Reuter

TOKYO (R) — Once conditioned to suffer in silence, more Japanese women are refusing nowadays to endure meekly the sexual harassment that has long been a feature of the workplace here.

"The attitude of companies has changed a bit but not all that much," feminist lawyer Mizuko Fukushima told Reuters. "But the attitude of women has changed a lot, compared to 10 years ago when we couldn't even conceive of a court case (in Japan)."

A major sexual harassment case against Mitsubishi Motors Corp's U.S. Unit has recently reminded Japanese firms of the costly legal dangers lurking abroad.

Few, however, expect the U.S. suit to serve as a serious wake-up call to corporations back home, where employment practices bar many women from management and relegate others to the role of decorative and subservient "office flowers".

Groping, sexual banter and queries about underwear are still standard fare in many Japanese offices.

"Companies that have advanced into the United States have adopted policies of being careful overseas," said Masao Kaneko, a Tokyo city official who until recently ran a labour hot line offering advice on sexual harassment. "But there has been little change in corporate management's view of the problem," Kaneko said. "This is not an environment in which management thinks seriously about sexual harassment."

In April, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) filed a suit in a district court to halt alleged sexual harassment of women at Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing of America Inc's (MMA) factory in Normal, Illinois.

The suit also seeks back pay with interest and benefits as well as compensatory and punitive damages that could reach \$300,000 each for as many as 700 female employees at the plant.

Japanese firms over the last half-decade or so have grown more aware of the potential problems of sexual discrimination, including sexual harassment, in the United States, where last year a total of 15,549 sexual harassment complaints were filed with the EEOC — 10 per cent of them by men.

"Many companies who went abroad consulted us about sexual discrimination including sexual harassment and we advised them as part of our risk management services," said a spokesman for Kyocera Mutual Fire and Marine Insurance, which in 1991 produced a video showing firms what behaviour was unacceptable overseas.

Changes have also come on the domestic scene. Japan's first sexual harassment case in 1989 sparked debate and added a new phrase — "seku hara" — to describe such acts.

In a high-profile ruling in April 1992, a district court in Fukuoka, Kyushu, ordered a publishing company and one of its editors to pay a woman it had employed 1.65 million Yen (\$15,700) in damages for spreading rumours that she was promiscuous and an alcoholic.

Later that year, Kiyomi Kikuchi became the first Japanese woman to go public with her name in a sexual harassment suit when she sought 5.85 million Yen (\$55,700) in damages from her employer, a consumer credit company, because of what she said were persistent, unwelcome sexual advances by her boss. A ruling has yet to be handed down.

No other plaintiffs have gone public, but at least three women are standing firm by staying at their jobs while fighting court battles, Fukushima said.

Companies, fearing the harm to their image and sales more than the tiny dent which small punitive damage awards would make in earnings, are seeking advice on what actions constitute sexual harassment in domestic offices, factories and shops.

Still, Japan's allergy to litigation, the desire to avoid public embarrassment, and the absence of a specific law banning sexual harassment keeps many cases out of court. Probably fewer than 10 suits are brought each year, lawyers said.

"Women's attitudes have changed and they no longer think it is their fault, but when it comes to deciding what action to take, they still feel worried and embarrassed and many stay silent," said lawyer Eisuko Fujimoto. Many face pressure from family and friends not to act, she added.

Postman delivers, but who's reading the mail?

By Jodi Maghakian
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Hollywood's oasty little secret has nothing to do with sex scandals or drug overdoses. It entails those lovely, heartfelt odes to the stars — fan mail — and who responds to them.

Simply put: It's usually not the celebrities. But fans should not despair. Most celebrities have people who work for them, talk for them, shop for them and, of course, correspond for them.

"Most actors wake up at 5, start their day at 7 and get home at 8 or 9," said Jack Tamkin, owner of Studio Fan Mail-Tamkin Colour of Los Angeles, who answers all his clients' letters with a hand-addressed, colour photo.

"You would think it was only housewives

and teenagers, and maybe it was at one time, but we receive letters from many professionals — doctors, dentists," said Noreen Jenny, co-owner of Celebrity Research Network in West Hills. "Some want to buy property next to their celebrity. Some want to loan celebrities money."

"We have handled Henry Winkler since he came to town. During his heyday, when he was the Fonzy, he would receive about 65,000 letters a month," Mr. Tamkin said. His company also handles stars from Friends, Party Of Five and Home Improvement.

Some letters are so poignant they do get passed on to the celebrity, said publicist Susan J. Kagan of Rogers and Cowoe in Los Angeles.

And every once in a while, a message is too alarming to ignore, and the publicists

will alert police.

But most fans just want a photo or an autograph.

"The fan clubs fulfill that a lot better, because there isn't the expectation that the celebrity will be in personal touch. Yet they are connecting with someone who understands how they feel and are keeping up with the star's career," said Linda Kay, president of the National Association of Fan Clubs in Burbank, California.

For computer-savvy fans, there's an even better route emerging for communicating with their favourite celebrity: Computer "chat rooms" where fans can ask unusual, intimate questions directly to stars who are online, responding in their own words.

"Goldie Hawn is as bubbly online as she is on the screen," said America Online spokeswoman Judy Tashbook of a recent

celebrity chat. "People asked what kind of computer she had, where she got her name."

Someone asked if she would let Brian "Kato" Kaelin, o.j. Simpson's infamous house guest, stay in her house, Ms. Tashbook said.

"No, and I would not take him to Burger King," Hawn answered.

Some celebrities like Woody Allen prefer chat rooms because they can interact with fans without being mobbed, Tashbook said. But beloved TV mom June Lockhart likes her letters.

"I like to read it all," said Lockhart, who receives letters from fans who go back 50 years. "I find that, even in person, people are so cordial. They like to establish a bond."

'Vowed virgins' of Albania live on blood-feud region

By Steve Pagani
Reuter

BAJZA, Albania — Deep in the barren mountain region of northern Albania, a group of women cling to an ancient tradition as old as the blood feuds that have returned to haunt this tiny corner of the Balkans.

Searing poverty, war and bloody vendettas wiping out the male line of a family in feud meant women — sometimes girls — took control of the household.

It is a custom rooted in legend that many even in Albania believed had died out with the feudal system Communist leaders tried to eradicate during 45 years in power.

But the women live on. They are known as the "vowed virgins" of Albania.

When a girl adopts the mantle of "paterfamilias", she cuts her hair short, dresses as a boy and takes on a man's job, which can mean back-breaking work toiling in the fields.

With a fervour similar to that of an order of Roman Catholic nuns, the "virgins" stick to the unwritten rule which requires them never to marry or have children.

What surprises the outsider is that the men and village elders in this staunchly chauvinistic society accord the "virgins" all the rights and privileges of fellow males.

No bar falls silent when one of the women walks in for a glass of throat-scorching raki (local brandy). They negotiate deals on behalf of the family and are consulted on village affairs.

Lula Ivanaj is one such woman. At the age of 15, her destiny was laid before her. She willingly accepted her widowed mother's plea to head the family of 10 daughters and one son. The boy was considered too weak to take on the job.

"I am never regarded as a woman but as a man," said Lula, 41, sitting in the one-room home of her elder sister in the rural town of Bajza, 140 kilometres north of Tirana.

"Usually if the men have been killed either through war or blood feuds, then a woman has the power to take over the defence of the family. But it was more often because of blood feuds," said the chain-smoking Lula, surrounded by family members assembled to mark a Roman Catholic feast day.

Family vendettas have made a comeback since the Communist dictatorship collapsed in 1990, and the Bajza area is serious blood-feuding country.

Lula's sister, Marije, herself a mother of 11 children, and other female family members wear long dark dresses, black scarves or white headwraps characteristic of the region. Lula wears a sweatshirt and trousers.

"I've never worn a dress or scarf. At weddings and on special occasions, I put on a suit, shirt and tie," Lula said with a loud laugh, shaking her crop of short, wavy hair.

After years in male company, Lula sits and gesticulates as a man, while her sisters display rural hospitality, offering olives, mutton and bread. Outside, pigs and chickens scratch the earth around fig and plum trees.

Does Lula talk to her sisters as would a woman?

"No, I never discuss women's affairs. Nor do they expect me to," she answered. Marije shook her head in agreement — confusingly, Albanians nod their head for "no" and shake it for "yes".

"We don't talk about women's subjects. I regard Lula as my brother," said Marije, who had never seen her husband until her wedding day.

Matchmakers had sought Lula as a wife for suitors when she was young.

"I used to run away from the house and hide whenever I saw them coming," she said.

She was originally known as "Lule" but changed her name to the more masculine form of "Lula".

Although Lula knows how to cook and sew, she has spent most of her working life driving a tractor. She is now an experienced welder — a job unthinkable for a "vowed-virgin" in the region — and hires out welding equipment to supplement a meagre income.

Lula's forebears migrated to the plains just a few kilometres south of the Albanian highlands to escape the harsh mountain life almost a century ago when Albania was ruled by the Ottoman Empire.

Peasants near the town of Bajza turning the soil with hoe and spade for this year's crop of potatoes and livestock fodder acknowledge the existence of the "virgins" with a smile.

They all knew Dilore, who lived nearby in Suk-Daje, and was thought to be the oldest "virgin" when she died last year at the age of 86.

A middle-aged woman called Pashke was also known to be living in the area, close to the Mediterranean coast and a short distance from the border with Montenegro.

Some villagers indicated a point beyond the range of grey mountains known as the Albanian Alps where the tradition of "vowed virgins" was believed to have originated.

The narrow, pot-holed asphalt road eads 150 kilometres north of the bustling capital, Tirana, a jolting journey taking four-and-a-half hours.

The trek follows a narrow dirt track clinging to the side of a dizzyingly steep mountain. The hairpin bends, absence of safety barriers and the proximity of tyre to sharp drop can

concentrate the mind of even the most experienced driver.

The white-knuckle descent to Tamare, the main village in the craggy range, can take an hour and a half.

Many of the inhabitants of the valley, cut through by a crystal clear river, travel over the mountain standing packed together on pickup trucks.

They talk of a place called Kelmendi, a community accessible from Tamare only by donkey or four-wheel drive vehicle, as the birthplace of the "warrior virgin" Nora — a legendary heroine who for a time fought back the Turks in the 17th century.

Folklore has it that a conquering Ottoman pasha wanted Nora of Kelmendi for his wife. Instead, she stabbed him to death, fled into the hills and, like a latter-day Boudicca, led local resistance against the occupying Turks.

She was eventually caught, but the Turks, acknowledging her status, accorded her the "privilege" of being executed as a man.

People in the area were known to marry comparatively late — 30 for men, 25 for women — to enable them to dedicate themselves to defending their territory. Girls cut their hair short and dressed like the boys.

Lula recalls the story of Nora of Kelmendi and is proud her family came from the nearby village of Shkrel. The tradition at least will live on with her.

"I started my career as a boy and my life will end as a man," she said.



Lula Ivanaj, one of Albania's vowed virgins smokes a cigarette while pushing forward a table with beer bottles for guests in her sister's house in Bajza, 140 kilometres from the Capital. Her sister Marije wears traditional dress while Lula who pledges to live her life as a man wears sweatshirt and trousers. Picture taken on April 24, 1996 (Reuter photo)

Creating Needs

By Jean-Claude Elias

IF MARKETING is about creating needs, then marketing personal computers should be the easiest job in the world. Indeed, most PC products, whether software or hardware, are automatically generating the need for other new products. Ironically, this doesn't even seem to be premeditated by manufacturers nor vendors. They are just reaping the results.

A simple example: The storage and display of quality photographs. Displaying high resolution colour photographs on your computer's screen can be a real trial for your eyes. The sharpness usually exceeds that of even the best TV set. However, it takes a high-end monitor to let you fully enjoy such a display. Forget about your standard 14" JD 250, regular screen. It won't do. Ideally you would acquire a 17" JD 400, super high-resolution thing.

Once you buy such a set, and therefore abandon the idea of that long-planned weekend in Aqaba, you discover that each stored photograph occupies huge space on the hard disk, the main storage area in your PC. The next step you take is to shop for a 1GB or 2GB hard disk (1GB = 1 billion characters). But of course, the machine you bought two years ago is now showing its age and won't properly handle a 2GB JD 800 disk. The salesman finds it a piece of cake convincing you to buy a new Pentium mother board (JD 500) in addition to the new disk. At this stage you also cancel your flight reservation for the next summer vacation in Greece.

Once you have installed the Pentium, the huge hard disk and the beautiful 17" screen, you'll probably crave after a fast CD-ROM drive. After all, the best photograph collections are now available on CD-ROMs. This time it won't be too painful, considering that a decent four-speed drive can be found in Jordan for about JD 100. Being a reasonable person and showing heroic stoicism, you turn down the idea of a magnificent colour scanner (JD 1,000) that would let you enter additional pictures in the computer.

You spend a few days enjoying the whole system, until

chip talk



you learn in a specialised magazine that many users have found that a single CD-ROM drive in a PC is not enough. Indeed, with the vast collection of CD-ROM titles on the market, having just one drive means you'll constantly keep changing the disc inside the unique unit. Quite tedious if you happen to have ten or more titles.

This is where the new CD-ROM towers come. As the name suggests, these new towers consist of a stack of several CD-ROM drives (4 to 25 for the time being) that one can connect to a computer. This allows several CD titles to be simultaneously and instantly available. Remember the juke box? This time you make an official and a dramatic announcement to your family. "No holidays abroad until the year 2000... at least." You've got to get one of these new babies.

The same story can be told with different starting points but with the same ending: Needs that create needs. New software require more storage capacity. Larger storage requires faster machines. Faster machines perform well only with new software. And so forth.

I'm exaggerating? Not a bit. Ask any PC user trying desperately to keep up with new products and releases. It's a never ending maelstrom. On the other hand who's complaining? For a PC addict, a good, high performance computer is more enjoyable than vacationing in Malibu Beach. The only real victim may be the addict's family.

A chronicle of events in the book of chances

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

It is not very often in a person's life that one gets to sit down to make a list of the important markers that characterise all the things, places, times and names that come to mean so much to such a person.

A list compiled in the spirit of making a record of the things that have come to mean, with the passing of time, something particularly special. A list where the first entry is dated Oct. 2, 1995, and where the most recent entry is dated May 2, 1996. A list which would, in time, serve as a reminder, as if any were needed, of the importance that someone, and something, have come to hold in both the heart and the soul.

Maybe we do need to write down such things because as time goes on, and as memory begins to fail us, we begin to make mistakes. We start to forget. To forget what a person was wearing on a certain day, or the way they moved while they were saying something. We need to hold on to the memory of how the words came out and how the smiles and the laughs accompanied them. This is very important because when everything else is gone, the memories are just about all that is left.

Moreover, this chronicle of events has very much to do with the element of chance. A kind of chance that can bring two people together and then abruptly pull them apart. Or the kind of chance that can bring two people together and still keep them together seven months later. The kind of chance that can take the most meticulous of planners and organisers by surprise. The kind that can catch such a person off guard and drag him or her in the sweeping tide of events that is the present.

A tide that can, and most certainly does, bring a sense of excitement, vitality, renewal and discovery to one's life. A tide that creates a new dimension where everything else



pales into insignificance. All this, and much more, happens when a truly special person wanders into another's life and becomes the very centre of it. Special, partly because of their ability to contribute new meanings and things to the everyday life of this other person thus enriching it tremendously.

But as much as all of this can be wonderful, it can also be very intimidating. Intimidating in the sense that the fear of loosening one's control over one's life can bring on a pensive state of mind for both people concerned.

In spite of this, we must not, and can never, surrender to our fears. We must always emphasise the good elements in a relationship and work to make sure that these bear fruit. Those which have to do with happiness, friendship, respect and understanding.

An understanding which is about respecting the space and freedom of others. An understanding which is about being able to confide in one another and to enjoy each other's company to the full. To be able to step back and give one another enough space for both to be able to keep enjoying a healthy social life. To live in the hope that the chance which had brought two people together can also allow them not only to stay together, but also to carry on with their respective lives having acknowledged the presence of one another in the other's life.

JTV CHANNEL TWO WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, May 9, 1996		9:10 10:00 10:25 11:10		Blackie's Majic News In English The Bold & The Beautiful Counterstrike	
3:00	Ala Edin				
3:25	The New 3 Stooges				
3:30	NBA				
3:40	Phibes				
5:00	News Flash				
5:01	French Programme — Le Chat Perche				
5:30	Varieties — Le Monde Est A Vous				
7:00	Le Journal				
7:15	Magazine — Archinede	3:00	Bonkers		
7:30	News Headlines	3:30	Richie Rich		
7:35	Carol And Company	3:45	Playabout		
8:00	Taratara	4:10	Animals of the Mediterranean		
9:10	Startrek	4:35	Bustin Loose		
10:00	News In English	5:00	News Flash		
10:25	Feature Film — The Dinner Takes It All	5:01	Children's Programme — Ordy		
	Starring: Kenny Rogers	5:15	Family Programme — L'Ecole Des Fans		
12:00	Matlock	6:00	Magazine — Thalassa		
		7:00	Le Journal		
		7:15	Magazine — Cinq Sur Cinq		
		7:35	The Nanny		
		8:00	Rhythms That Peak		
		8:30	Millner-Fenwick		
		8:45	Rock Aroundy The World		
		9:05	100 Years Of Capitalism In Korea		
		10:00	News In English		
		10:25	The Bold and the Beautiful		
		11:10	P.S. I Love U		
		11:55	Taurus Risking		
Monday, May 13, 1996					

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

* STANDING causes fatigue as much as walking does. In either case man uses 300 muscles.

* THE PHARAOH, who drove the Jews away from Egypt, is still unknown though he is thought to be Ramses II.

* PENGUINS try to prevent water from freezing in the pond by swimming in a circular line. If they fail and water gets frozen, they have to emigrate to coastal regions where water is open.

* FIZZING beverages can be made without soda if snow taken from the heart of mountains is used.

* IN WINTER, fluff in the form of a shoe, grows on the sand grouse's paws so as to enable it to move steadily on the snow. Thus it frees itself from diving.

* THE TIGER sometimes weighs about 300 kg whereas the tigress never exceeds 150 kg.

** Your voice is soft and melodious like music. Sawtold na'im wa'athb kal-mooseeqa.

JOKES

* "Your play is very dull. You bring shame to the team," said the coach reproaching the player. "Don't listen to him. He doesn't know what he says. He talks like a parrot repeating what others say," his fellow player retorted encouragingly.

* One of the players noticed that somebody never parts with the golf club either in summer or in winter. "It seems this game makes you so mad." "No," he answered. "Then you've some friends or relatives here." "No," said the man. "Are you a sports reporter?" "No, but to be frank with you, I'm a pickpocket."

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

** My love for you is deep and touching. Hobbi laka ameeq wa shadeed.

** You are the girl of my dreams. Ennaki fatat ahlami.

** I'll love you forever. Sa'ohibboki illi 'abad.

** I think of you all the time. Ofakkir feeki alad'dawam.

** When you smile, you look like a queen. Endama tabtasimeen, tabdeen kama law konti malika.

** Come and sit beside me. Ta'ala wajjessee bejanibi.

** Your skin feels like silk. Enna malmasa bishratik kal-harir.

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

(1) State approximately where the following islands are situated: Leeward Island, Faroes, Andaman Islands, Tristan da Cunha, Mauritius.

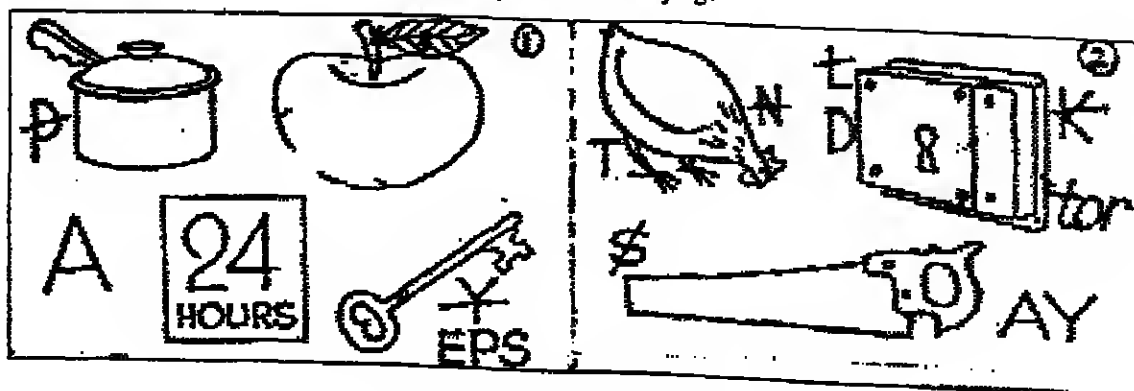
(2) Arrange the following in the order of their flowering: dog rose, elder, hawthorn, blackthorn, honeysuckle.

(3) Who were the stars in the following films: City Lights, Mr. Deeds Goes to Town, Animal Cracker, The Private Life of Henry VIII.

(4) In what parts of the world are these ships to be found? junk, sampan, dahabieh, keel, xebec, dhow, catamaran, felucca, schoot, coracle.

PUZZLES

(A) SO THEY SAY
Can you read this saying?



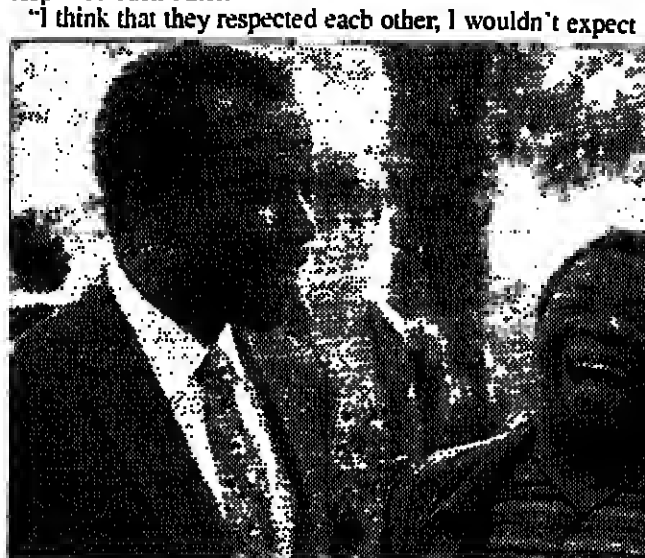
(B) Underline the word missing from the brackets:

54 (hide) 98
53 (....) 16

Mandela, De Klerk probably never liked each other — actor

CAPE TOWN (R) — British actor Michael Caine said Friday President Nelson Mandela and his deputy F.W. De Klerk probably never liked each other but were forced to work together to free South Africa from apartheid.

Caine, who plays the part of Mr. De Klerk — South Africa's last white president — in a \$5 million U.S. television movie about the country's historic 1994 all-race elections, told reporters in Cape Town he believed the two men respected each other.



Actor Sidney Poitier (left) shares a joke with local actor Jerry Mofokeng (right) at a press conference to discuss the film *One Man, One Vote* (Reuters photo)

that they ever liked each other," Caine said of the two men who shared the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize.

The film, which has the working title of "one man, one vote", stars American actor Sidney Poitier as Mr. Mandela and will be filmed over 25 days on location in Cape Town.

"This film was quite a sentimental journey for Sidney and I, from doing an anti-apartheid film 23 years ago which we couldn't shoot here and now coming here as 'presidents'," Caine said.

Caine, who has starred in films such as *Alfie*, *Mona Lisa* and *Hannah and Her Sisters* said he had recently met Mr. De Klerk to study his mannerisms and found him to be a funny and kind person.

"He is quite funny. We had a few laughs and drank some wine together," he said.

The film's director, Joseph Sargent, said the film was not an adaptation of Mr. Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk To Freedom*. The film would focus on Mr. Mandela's later years in prison and the negotiation process which led to the all-race polls, he said.

The film will be syndicated on American television.

The casting of foreign actors to star in the film recently caused an uproar among local actors, who questioned the wisdom of hiring outsiders to portray South Africans.

Poitier, whose film credits include *In The Heat Of The Night*, *Cry, The Beloved Country* and *Sneakers* said he was honoured to play Mandela.

"I only know him from his values. I think I can gather from his values and deeds what his philosophy is," he said.



Actors Michael Caine (left) and Sidney Poitier (right) show off mock election posters at a press conference to discuss the film *One Man, One Vote*. Poitier plays the role of Nelson Mandela, opposite Caine's F.W. De Klerk in the film which is being shot in and around Cape Town (Reuters photo)

A wave hello made Charlton Heston a star

By Simon Bradwell
Reuters



Charlton Heston

WELLINGTON — One day in 1950, legendary Hollywood film director Cecil B. DeMille was standing outside his office on the Paramount Film Studio complex in Los Angeles, when a young man drove past and waved.

DeMille, who was casting a film called *The Greatest Show On Earth*, asked his secretary who the man was. She replied he was a young actor who had made one modestly successful film, which DeMille hadn't liked.

"I liked the way he waved just now," DeMille said. "We better have him in to talk about the part of circus manager."

The *Greatest Show On Earth* went on to win the Academy Award for best picture and gross the modern equivalent of \$300 million worldwide. Thanks to his simple friendly gesture, Charlton Heston was on the way to superstardom.

"That's serendipity, the unforeseen positive consequence of an entirely random choice," Heston, still an imposing figure at 71, told Reuters while in New Zealand to promote his autobiography, in the arena.

That stroke of luck launched Heston on an enviable career. He went on to star in blockbusters like *The Ten Commandments* (1956), *Planet Of The Apes* (1968), *Earthquake* (1973), and *Ben Hur*, for which he won the 1959 best actor Academy Award.

"The camera must love you, good health is enormously valuable, good physical condition helps. Talent is useful, intelligence is useful, discipline is crucial, but luck is something every successful actor has," he said.

"The actor who says luck has not been a factor in his life is either a liar or an idiot. My luckiest break was sitting behind the girl I would marry, first day of theatre practice at Northwestern University. If I hadn't gotten that girl, I wouldn't be talking to you."

Heston has been married to that 'girl', Lydia, for over 50

years. They have two children: Fraser, a film director and Holly, a publicist.

"Some kind of a stable base to your life is crucial or you just unravel, as I've seen happen to many fellas," Heston said in his famous baritone drawl. "The fact that my wife was an actress has made it much easier for us both."

Asked what performances he is most proud of, Heston replied laconically: "Well I don't know, I'm not through yet."

But when pressed, he acknowledges grand epics and historical roles are his favourites. *El Cid*, *Julius Caesar*, *Moses*, *Michelangelo* and *Henry VIII* are among the more memorable of his film roles, which number over 60.

"In films you like the parts that win a lot of prizes. That's partly vanity of course, but it also solidifies your economic permanence in the trade. You like the films that earn huge sums of money, because you have to do successful films every so often or else you don't get to do any films."

"I am personally drawn to autobiographical roles. I've played more of those roles than any American actor. Those parts are very interesting because great men are different from you and me, and they're more interesting people."

The one remaining historical role that Heston would love to play is the Duke of Wellington. Outside of historical figures, Shakespeare's tragic heroes hold a special fascination.

"They are the greatest parts, the most permanent of all. They were being performed four centuries ago, and they will be performed four centuries from now."

"Acting is something that you never get perfect. You do a scene and you say, 'that's as good as it can be'. But a whole part? No. You keep trying, that's why you keep coming back to those Shakespearean monsters."

Heston names Orson Welles' 1941 masterpiece *Citizen*



Charlton Heston with his wife, Lydia

Kane as the greatest film of all time, and Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1993) as the most recent truly great film.

If he had his time again, would he still choose all the same films, the good and the bad?

"I'd like to do 'em all over again and do 'em better," he said, sounding like an aging gunslinger from one of his many westerns.

But asked what last acting challenge he would like to achieve and Heston is wistful, but typically honest.

"To get it absolutely right one time, one time."

Summer movies — stars take a back seat to concepts

By John Horn
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Bill Paxton hasn't sold many movie tickets in his acting career. Few people say, "let's go see the new Will Smith film" and it's been awhile since Michael J. Fox carried a hit film.

Nevertheless, these decidedly second-tier actors are the leading players in what could prove to be this summer's three biggest movies — Paxton's *Twister*, Smith's *Independence Day* and Fox's *The Frighteners*.

In a rare demonstration that star power isn't the only key to the box-office safe, several of the summer's most anticipated titles are driven more by eye-popping concepts than million-dollar performances.

Instead of paying the likes of Jim Carrey, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Tom Cruise \$20 million apiece, the producers of these three movies are pouring that precious loot into special effects and letting the stories — not the stars — do the talking.

"Sometimes the idea is king," says Tom Rothman, whose 20th Century Fox Studio is releasing *Independence Day* on July 3.

A number of inevitable star vehicles — including Carrey's *Cable Guy*, Schwarzenegger's *Eraser* and Cruise's *Mission: Impossible* — are sprinkled throughout the school-break season.

Yet when all the receipts are totaled, the marquee players could trail their starless competitors.

Simply having a big star in a lead role is no guarantee for success — just take a look at Julia Roberts' disastrous *Mary Reilly* and the Sharon Stone fiasco *Diabolique*.

A good plot or fantastic special effects (or both), on the other hand, can make the potential drawbacks of a low-cost cast disappear.

Universal Pictures is betting that writer-director Peter Jackson's execution of the comic supernatural film *The Frighteners* (July 19) will prove more attractive than the movie's cast.

Ever since the *Back To The Future* films of a decade ago, Fox has starred in one clunker after another: *Life With Mikey*, *For Love Or Money*, *Greedy* and *Where The River Flows North*, although he did have a supporting role in last year's modest hit, *The American President*.

"Universal's line has always been that the concept was the story — they never wanted it to be star-driven," says Jackson, who made 1994's *Heavenly Creatures*.

Beyond Fox, *The Frighteners* is filled with the relatively obscure performers Trini Alvarado, Peter Dobson, Dee Wallace Stone and Jeffrey Combs.

"I like working with actors who don't bring a huge amount of awareness to the film," Jackson says. "You want to let the character, not the actor, drive the movie."

Recent Hollywood history suggests that small stars can indeed yield big profits.

Jurassic Park, the highest-grossing film of all time, didn't break records because it featured Jeff Goldblum and Laura Dern. The draw was the dinosaurs. The *Batman* concept is

a popular enough franchise to survive two leading men — Michael Keaton and Val Kilmer — and is about to get a third, with TV's George Clooney.

Twister, which opens on May 10, is one of the summer's most talked-about movies not because of actors Paxton,

List of Summer movies

By The Associated Press

Major summer movies, grouped by planned release dates:

May 10: *Twister*, drama about tornadoes and the people who chase them (Helen Hunt, Bill Paxton).

May 17: *Flipper*, movie version of TV show, starring Elijah Wood.

May 22: *Mission: Impossible*, Tom Cruise stars in a remake of the television espionage series.

May 24: *Spy Hard*, Leslie Nielsen in a send-up of the James Bond-spy genre; *Heaven's Prisoners*, Alec Baldwin stars in a movie version of the crime novel.

May 31: *Eddie*, Whoopi Goldberg stars as a limo driver who gets to coach the Knicks; *Dragonheart*, digital effects bring a dragon (voice by Sean Connery) to life.

June 7: *The Rock*, terrorist thriller set on Alcatraz Island with Sean Connery and Nicolas Cage; *The Phantom*, Billy Zane plays the comic-strip legend.

June 14: *The Cable Guy*, Jim Carrey is a sadistic cable television technician; *Moll Flanders*, Robin Wright plays a prostitute who redeems her life and finds love.

June 21: *The Hunchback Of Notre Dame*, Disney's animated musical retelling of the Victor Hugo classic; *Eraser*, Arnold Schwarzenegger helps relocated witnesses forget their past; *Lone Star*, the latest film from independent cinema's John Sayles.

June 28: *The Nutty Professor*, Eddie Murphy in Jerry Lewis' role as a scientist with a secret potion; *Striptease*, Demi Moore takes it off to make ends meet.

July 3: *Independence Day*, special-effects spectacular about unfriendly extraterrestrials; *Harriet The Spy*, an adaptation of the popular girls' book.

July 8: *Kingpin*, Woody Harrelson in *Dumb And Dumber* set in a bowling alley.

July 10: *Phenomenon*, John Travolta stars as an incredibly smart man.

July 12: *Multiplicity*, overly busy father (Michael Keaton) has himself cloned.

July 17: *Kazaam*, basketball's Shaquille O'Neal is cast as a very large genie.

July 19: *The Frighteners*, ghosts share the screen with Michael J. Fox in the supernatural story; *Larger Than Life*, Bill Murray is a motivational speaker who gets a strange inheritance.

July 26: *The Fan*, Robert De Niro plays a psychotic (surprise) baseball fan; *House Arrest*, Jamie Lee Curtis' kids lock their parents up when they want a divorce; *A Time To Kill*, Sandra Bullock is featured in the latest John Grisham movie; *Joe's Apartment*, strange look at a vermin-infested dwelling; *The Adventures Of Pinocchio*, live-action telling of a cobbler (Martin Landau) and his wooden creation.

July 28: *A Very Brady Sequel*, more comic adventures in the life of the sitcom clan.

August undetermined: *John Carpenter's Escape From L.A.*, update of 1981's futuristic penal colony story with Kurt Russell; *Emma*, Gwyneth Paltrow stars in yet another Jane Austen movie; *The Relic*, Penelope Ann Miller in a thriller set in a natural history museum.

Aug. 2: *Matilda*, Roald Dahl's children's hook is brought to the screen by director Danny DeVito; *Courage Under Fire*, Denzel Washington plays a military officer charged in a friendly fire incident.

Aug. 7: *Gone Fishin'*, vacation comedy marred in production by fatal boat stunt.

Aug. 9: *Tin Cup*, golfer (Kevin Costner) on the golf course; *High School High*, Jon Lovitz teaches on a tough campus; *Bound*, Jennifer Tilly and Gina Gershon are teamed in a mob drama; *Fled*, Laurence Fishburne in a thriller about a prison break and the Cuban mafia.

Aug. 14: *Alaska*, Fraser Heston directs his father Charlton in a northwest adventure.

Aug. 16: *Tales From The Crypt Presents Bordello Of Blood*, second feature film based on the cable TV series; *Carpool*, commuting comedy featuring Tom Arnold; *Last Man Standing*, Bruce Willis has top billing in a drama inspired by Kurosawa's *Yojimbo*.

Aug. 23: *The Spitfire Grill*, young woman makes a new start in small-town diner.

Aug. 30: *The Stupids*, Tom Arnold stars in a comedy about and for the unsophisticated; *The Trigger Effect*, young couple's life is thrown into chaos following a blackout.

Late summer undetermined: *First Kid*, Sinbad and Robert Guillaume team in a secret service comedy; *Chain Reaction*, Keanu Reeves and Morgan Freeman pair in a thriller.

Helen Hunt and Jami Gertz.

The movie is directed by Speed's Jan De Bont and was written by Michael Crichton (who wrote *Jurassic Park*) and his wife, Anne-Marie Martin.

In the film, Hunt (of TV's *Mad About You*) plays Paxton's estranged wife. The two are midwest storm chasers determined to get in the path of a tornado. Once there, they hope to place scientific instruments in the cyclone's path, taking measurements as the devices are sucked into the vortex.

"It's not that I didn't want stars," says De Bont, noting that Hunt is well-known to TV viewers. "I wanted actors that had a natural talent."

"If I had cast Arnold Schwarzenegger, you would expect him to behave in a certain way — he would probably pull out a machine gun and try to shoot the tornado."

And a lot of costs. Without a high-priced actor, the makers of *Twister* — like *Independence Day* — put the bulk of their \$75 million budget into computer effects.

Independence Day is about another menace in the sky: Instead of a tornado, it's invaders from another planet. The movie stars Smith (of TV's *Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air*), Bill Pullman and Goldblum.

The premise of *Independence Day* is the kind of wild storyline made famous in the peril films of years ago.

The film presumes that life exists beyond Earth. Rather than bearing gifts from another solar system, the *Independence Day* aliens intend to destroy the Earth over the July 4th weekend.

Dean Devlin, who wrote and produced *Independence Day*, says he and director Roland Emmerich were inspired by now-famous movies that, at the time, starred hardly famous actors: *Jaws*, *Star Wars*, *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* and *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*.

"Those were the films that Roland and I fell in love with as children," says Devlin, who collaborated with Emmerich on *Stargate*, which cast the then ice-cold Kurt Russell in a starring role.

When John Carpenter made *Escape From New York* 15 years ago, Russell wasn't a big star. He is more famous now, but Carpenter says Russell alone can't bring people into this summer's sequel, *Escape From L.A.*

While Paramount paid Russell \$10 million to star in the follow-up, the studio spent another \$40 million on the movie itself, guaranteeing good special effects. (The original cost just \$7 million.)

"The audience has changed since *Escape From New York* — you have to give them more juice," Carpenter says. "Five movies open every weekend. You're trying to get attention, but how do you get awareness up, especially in the hinterlands?"

The answer for several of this summer's filmmakers is not big stars but the loudest bells and whistles. Come Labour Day, that formula could clinch the summer sweepstakes.

Struggle for control of women's fertility

By Nafisa Shah

ISLAMABAD — Thousands of little empty toy cradles hang in shrines across Pakistan.

They have been left by desperate women who have travelled hundreds of miles in the hope that the gesture will bring them a child — without which they are spurned as useless by their husbands, families, villages and eventually society as a whole.

Puberty means a girl is ready for marriage. An early wedding is good because it promises a long fertile marriage. Some ethnic groups in the country even consider an unmarried girl's menstruation as a possible murder since it could have been a potential child.

Purda — the veil — technically begins with puberty and ends with menopause. Men joke about women who have completed the menopause, referring to them as mard — literally, man.

The most frequently asked question of a recently wed bride is whether she is pregnant. The in-laws, especially the mother-in-law, whose power emanates from controlling women in the extended family, are interested in when the baby will be born. So is the whole neighbourhood.

Says medical officer Dr. Nusrat Shah: "In our outpatients' department, women who are only married five months come for a check-up, wondering why they cannot conceive. Often it is the mothers-in-law whose constant nagging sends them seeking a cure."

For urban women who marry late, the relatives' taunts come with the warning, "you have little time left."

But many children do not automatically ensure a secure marriage: They have to be boys.

Gynaecologist Sadiqa Jaffari recalls a man who had six sons and wanted one more to make him a father of seven boys, which would give him a higher status in society. "He said he would give his wife an amulet of gold bangles if she bore him the seventh son."

Among some groups, such as the Pathans, girls are not counted when a father tells how many children he has. A Pathan who says *dana* (two pieces) is referring only to sons.

Dr. Afroz Kazi of the National Institute of Fertility Control says infertility is not a major problem nationally, but it remains a major social issue and it is women who take the blame: Children come from God, but women who fail to deliver them must be punished.

Men seldom acknowledge that the problem may be theirs. Says gynaecologist Dr. Qamar Abbas: "Very few men agree to go for semen analysis. Those who do will never inform their wives that it is they who have the problem."

"A lot of them do not believe in it. They say, 'If we can have sex, there's no problem.'"

Even when sterilisation is sought, it is women who must undergo the treatment.

"The use of vasectomy is almost non-existent," says Qamar Abbas. "There is a myth that a man with a vasectomy becomes a woman's ghillani (slave). Moreover, men always keep a provision for themselves for a second or a third marriage."

Men who have given permission for sterilisation often use it as an excuse for a second marriage. "I have countless cases of women who come weeping to me, saying that their husbands have re-married," says Qamar Abbas.

In addition, many women try to have the operation reversed because their husband has changed his mind.

Women who are sterilised and then lose children frequently think it is the work of God.

"We may have committed a sin and God is teaching us a lesson," said a woman whose child died in an epidemic.

Sick women, like those considered immoral, are rejected. Women with fistulas — holes between the bladder and/or rectum and the vagina, usually caused by prolonged, obstructed or medically unattended childbirth — become social outcasts, "abandoned by everybody," says Sadiqa Jaffari.

Dr. Shershah, one of the country's few male gynaecologists, describes the case of a woman who developed a large fistula — a comparatively common complaint in rural areas — because of inadequate medical attention: "She thought she had committed a sin to meet this kind of fate. When Ayesha went back to her relatives, they did not want her. Ayesha ended up in our psychiatric ward. I am told Ayesha, now a sex worker, comes occasionally to the hospital with venereal disease."

A family planning consultant recalls asking a man why he would not have a vasectomy rather than subjecting his sick wife to a tubal ligation and was told: "She's going to die sometime soon. Why should I go through all this trouble for her?"

Dr. Nusrat Shah says women are so anemic "that we have to rely on massive blood transfusion in deliveries". Blood from relatives is safer than blood from professional donors, but many husbands are reluctant donors.

Meanwhile, there are remarkable stories of women who have managed to dodge the system of collective control over the female body.

A former circus dancer, Bano, had married the eldest son of an influential family. But she failed to get pregnant. After learning that she had fibroids in her uterus, she told her husband she was seven months pregnant and must go to the city for the delivery since she did not trust the traditional midwives.

In town, a friend helped her acquire an abandoned baby. Two years later, Bano repeated the exercise, but this time was able to go through a recognised adoption agency.

For the most part, however, women accept the pressures. Halima from Mithri Machine village in Khairpur has two children and wants more, even though she has had five complicated miscarriages and her husband does not mind her undergoing sterilisation.

Society's needs, rather than those of individual women, also dominate birth-control programmes. In the early days, says Hilda Saeed, editor of the journal National Health, "the focus was on the control of fertility per woman without any consideration of what she was going through."

When the thrust was changed towards motivation, it was again women who were targeted, says consultant Seemi Kamal: "It was a network of services that women needed, not motivation."

Emphasis was then put on distribution of contraceptives — most of which were directed at women, though they had little control over their own fertility. Family planning and health clinics were run as different units, as though a womb and a woman were separate entities.

The Population Welfare and Health ministries have now been combined, and a new Social Action Programme treats family planning as part of community development. The government is setting out to train 33,000 health workers and 12,000 family planning workers, but they are mostly women targeting women, without full involvement of men or the community — Paos Feature

For Chernobyl victims, health crisis just starting

By Brian Killen

Reuter

AKSAKOVSHCHINA, Belarus (R) — Valentina Dimko was only a baby when clouds of radioactive contamination erupted from the Chernobyl nuclear power station and spread over much of Europe.

But the frail 11-year-old girl knows exactly why she is in a secluded clinic in this wooded region near the Belarusian capital Minsk. "Chernobyl," she whispered timidly.

That one word said it all for the hundreds of children in this former Soviet republic who have suffered from thyroid cancer since the world's worst nuclear accident on April 26, 1986.

Valentina's home is in the southern Bragin region — one of the most contaminated areas of Belarus, which was hit by more radioactive particles than any other country, including Ukraine where Chernobyl is located.

The Aksakovshchina Clinic, 30 kilometres west of Minsk, is stark evidence that Belarus, which lost one in three of its residents in World War II, is starting at another human catastrophe. Today's enemy is invisible but just as cruel.

Doctors at the clinic, devoted purely to Chernobyl victims, are convinced that the worst is yet to come.

"After 10 years, as far as medical consequences are concerned, Chernobyl is only just beginning," Chief Doctor Sergei Korytko told Reuters.

The situation is much worse here in Belarus than in Russia or Ukraine because we got 70 per cent of the radionuclides.

Dr. Korytko was especially concerned about thyroid cancer, although he feared problems could develop in other areas such as the lungs, mammary glands, stomach, bone tissue and blood.

"Every year we are getting another 100 cases of thyroid cancer among children and there is no sign of that trend reversing," he said. "On the contrary, some forecasts say the number of cases could rise to 2,000, 3,000 or 4,000."

He said these forecasts could even be on the low side, considering that no one predicted as many as 500 cases so far.

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Other medical experts agreed with Dr. Korytko's gloomy prognosis and they disputed the widely-held view that many health problems in the region could be attributed to fear or stress.

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Another expert, Professor Alexander Povereny, said thyroid cancer cases so far were indeed likely to be the tip of the iceberg. "The effects of damage to the thyroid glands will peak only 20 to 25 years, maybe up to 40 years, after the accident."

Vladimir Shevchenko, who has studied the effects of radiation for 30 years, said future generations could suffer from unspecified inherited problems.

"There will certainly be genetic consequences of the Chernobyl accident. There already are some," he said, adding that some experts predicted a world total of 8,400 "inherited anomalies" in the first post-Chernobyl generation.

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'Assistance to UNRWA must be in harmony with the overall vision of a better future for the people of this region'

FOLLOWING IS the full text of the speech delivered by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, at an informal meeting of major donor and host governments of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) on May 8:

May I say at the outset what a pleasure it is for me to have this opportunity to address this meeting organized by UNRWA, with representatives from the donor countries and host countries for Palestinian refugees, and the PLO.

I would like to make the observation, Mr. chairman, that when we met here last year in Amman at this time, we met to reflect on past achievements and make assessment of the present situation regarding UNRWA's work with the Palestinian refugees, with all the Palestinian refugees in the five provinces of UNRWA. That meeting was of great relevance and importance since it reflected the comprehensive issue, I stress again, of Palestinian refugees in the five provinces. Since that meeting, Mr. Hansen, commissioner-general of UNRWA, I understand that UNRWA decided to have its external relations department located in Gaza, thus moving from Amman. We hope that this initiative, and as I have said at the donor conference meetings since October 1993 when we met in Washington, that the front-ending of assistance to the crucial issues of quality of life and livelihood of our brethren in Gaza and in the West Bank, should reflect the major priority for my country. However, I believe that we meet here again to discuss, with all due respect, not only the future of UNRWA but to discuss the future of Palestinian refugees in the five provinces. I am glad that many of the governments here would consider empowering their embassies in Tel Aviv with the responsibility of the future of UNRWA's affairs. I would like to remind you that we are meeting here in the context of host countries and donors to the Palestinian refugees. With all due respect to the government of Israel, I do not understand how the progression of empowering foreign and donor embassies in Tel Aviv can serve the purpose of host countries and donors. The major donors' meetings, may I remind you, which include those countries such as Syria and the Lebanon, would presumably have to continue in Amman as they cannot yet be held in Gaza. The officials responsible for this matter would have to move from Tel Aviv to Amman to

attend such meetings, and I would like to point out that it is not only for reasons of efficiency, practicality and logistics that I regard this particular development as worrying, particularly if we are to address the comprehensiveness of the refugee question in the five provinces of refugees.

It is of course needless to emphasize that the refugee problem constitutes one of the major elements of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Due to our geographical proximity and historical legacy, Jordan has hosted, as you well know, three waves of involuntary migration. We have not only felt the impact of these waves, but we have also been affected by them.

I would like to point out that the refugee population which UNRWA serves in Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza, Syria and the Lebanon is currently three million, two hundred thousand. With these major population inflows, the Palestinian refugees in Jordan (aside from other categories of displaced persons) reached 1.3 million in 1995, or 40.6 per cent of the total refugees. I am citing these figures not for narrative purposes, Mr. Chairman, but for purposes of reminding this distinguished gathering that the very term "refugee" in many countries of the world is no longer PC — politically correct. In this country and in Article 8 of our Peace Treaty with Israel we made constructive and clear reference to the future of democracy by referring clearly to refugees. I do understand the practical difficulties of initiating the final status talks between the PLO and the government of Israel in Taba. And I appreciate the role of the Egyptian government in hosting these talks. As I mentioned when I met yesterday with the prime minister of Egypt, we believe that we play an ancillary supporting role. But I do want to make it very clear that in speaking of the comprehensive nature of the refugee problem, with 1.3 million refugees, representing two thirds of all the listed refugees residing outside the West Bank and Gaza, this figure could be compared with only 10 per cent of Palestinian refugees who settled in the East Bank of Jordan in 1948. With the refugee population growing over the years in Jordan, 18 fold, we have shouldered the major responsibility of hosting the Palestinian refugees. Jordan has given, since 1952, in accordance with its constitution, full citizenship to Palestinian refugees who were already living in Jordan. The unification of the East and West Banks of Jordan has provided the refugees and their descendants with equal

rights and obligations which include, but are not limited to, employment, ownership, investment, business and other facets of economic and social life. Hence, it has become very difficult to distinguish between the characteristics of the two main components of Jordanian society.

However, the situation of the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan, as in other host countries, represents a comprehensive and distinct case. About 20 per cent of registered refugees and displaced persons currently live in 10 camps in Jordan.

The International Mission of the Refugee Working Group in 1994 issued a report on refugee camps in Jordan and the Lebanon. Among the main impressions of the mission were the following:

— The living conditions of Palestinians have significantly deteriorated due to reduced UNRWA budgets and a serious reduction in financial support from the PLO, reduced remittances from Palestinians in the Gulf states, rapid population growth, and in the case of the Lebanon, as we all know and continue to grieve, the effects of war.

— The most pressing problems, and I continue to quote, are unemployment in all host countries as well as the problems of the displaced in the Lebanon.

— Most insist on their "right to return" although interpretations and expectations vary.

— The deepest aspiration of Palestinian refugees is for dignity and identity. The report concluded, you recall, that:

— There is no hope for a durable peace in the Middle East until there is a comprehensive solution to the refugee issue.

— Palestinians are suffering. They urgently require our economic and humanitarian assistance comprehensively in the five provinces of UNRWA.

Although the Jordanian government provides the camps with water, electricity and other services, our infrastructure facilities are often inadequate. As I mentioned, we host about 40 per cent of all registered Palestinian refugees. The Report of the International Mission points out that "it is estimated that the Jordanian government contributes about \$300 million per year, in one form or another, to the Palestinian refugees". \$300 million per year. May I ask the distinguished representatives of governments of this host and donor countries' meeting which government contributed the equivalent of \$300 million per year over the past several years for the distressed Palestinian people? This contribution includes the

payment of the rent of the camps, land, the cost of education of refugee students at government schools (above the 10th grade), improvements in infrastructure facilities in the camps as well as the provision of medical care in government hospitals.

There are 202 UNRWA schools in Jordan serving 150,000 students up to the 10th grade only. Ninety three per cent of these schools are used on a double-shift basis. About 24 per cent of these schools are utilising unsatisfactory rented premises. UNRWA provides its health services through a network of 22 health centres. Although these services were improved, the daily number of medical consultations is still too high, averaging 105 consultations per doctor.

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I make these points because I believe that the essence of this meeting is substance. Jordan has remained a close partner with UNRWA in supplying refugees with needed services. In paragraph 28 of your 1994 report, the UNRWA commissioner-general summarised this partnership in a few words. The paragraph reads: "In Jordan, the Agency's relationship with the government remained excellent. The support of the government was pivotal to the success of the agency programmes. The services which the government itself provided to Palestinian refugees in the country — about 40 per cent of the total number of refugees registered with UNRWA and the largest refugee population anywhere — were critical to the well-being of the refugees and their sense of relative social and economic stability and security."

We have spared no effort to offer the kind of services mentioned in the UNRWA report, to adopt structural adjustment and reforms to take necessary steps towards balancing our budget, over and above addressing the requirements of

political economy.

In 1995, the International Monetary Fund's report referred to my country, among others in the region (including Egypt, Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia and Israel) as having implemented more or less sustained macro-economic policy reforms in recent years focusing on fiscal adjustment supported by a tight monetary policy. These countries, the IMF report mentions, made headway in reducing their budget deficits, bringing down their inflation rates and improving their external performance.

All these statistics mean something to the man and woman in the streets, in our towns and in our villages and in the refugee camps. Generally they mean economic anarchy. When Mr.

the host of the Refugee Working Group and the other is the Refugee Studies Programme at Oxford University where I have had the privilege of supporting that particular eminent initiative. We stated in the Treaty of Peace with Israel the principles for the resolution of the problem. In dealing with refugees and displaced persons, we recognise both the magnitude and the human dimension of the problem. In everything we have read and heard today about the final status talks over the next three years I have not expected to hear reference with this clarity to the question of refugees. It is for that reason that I state once again and publicly today that the capacity of the governments of Jordan and, if I may, the government of Egypt to support the ancillary role of the host country and the donor country, and maybe it is not expected of me to say this at this time, the capacity of the host countries, including the Lebanon and Syria, would be severely constrained if the issue of comprehensive addressing the refugee question, the Palestinian question in its refugee component, is reduced or diluted or changed. The question remains: Is there a human content to peace building, is there a human content to security? We need multilateral meetings to bring about a balance between the principles of a just and permanent solution of the refugee problem and the need for alleviating the suffering and the improvement of living conditions in various host countries, but without prejudice to the rights to which the refugees are entitled under the rules of international law.

Luckily, UNRWA and the U.N. agencies were able eventually to join the Multilateral Working Group and its role has been recognised both in the plenary meetings and in the inter-sessional seminars. Following the agreements between Israel and the PLO and the treaty between Jordan and Israel, UNRWA responded by preparing a preliminary identification of projects to participate on a project basis in its own way in the promotion of peace. On October 6, 1993, at the meeting of the advisory commission, the agency formally launched the peace implementation programme (PIP). It stated that during the interim period it would strive to meet the Palestinian request for assistance and priorities to the extent that the international community provides the financial backing. This programme has been met with positive responses from the donors and is not limited to the West Bank and Gaza. It

also includes the host countries of Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

There is uncertainty today concerning the possible outcome of a final settlement (the talks for which have started in Taba between Israel and the Palestinian Authority). Refugees are bewildered and they do not know what the future has in store for them. Uncertainty, with all due respect, Mr. Chairman, also surrounds the fate of the UNRWA mandate as an agency that represents the international community in shouldering the responsibility towards the fulfilment of the needs of Palestinian refugees. Although in the short-term the level of uncertainty about its mandate was reduced when it was extended for three years at our last meeting here in Amman, this extension is too short for any reasonable agenda for the implementation of a complex programme of return, compensation, rehabilitation, absorption and other mutually agreed and internationally supported measures within the framework of a just and permanent solution. Every party involved wishes to arrive at a comprehensive solution within a short period of time. But the complex nature of the problems of the displaced and of the refugees requires the patience, the goodwill and a sense of fairness inherent in the international ethic and the United Nations ethic to arrive at a resolution equitable to all.

Awaiting such a resolution, efforts of the international community must focus on the three dimensions of the issue with new terms of reference for UNRWA or for any U.N. agency. These dimensions must include the human, the physical, as well as the economic, and must start now, without prejudice to the political rights of the Palestinians that are still in the process of negotiation.

Stating the above clearly indicates that the negotiations so far have not arrived at solutions or at distinguishing a paradigm for us all to contribute to. It is very difficult for me to be able to stand here and to speak of continually contributing to all this country has done without a clear understanding of the comprehensive nature of the issue of the five provinces and of the comprehensive role of host and donor countries. It is a question of national priority, indeed of national security for my country to point very clearly to the importance of developing a clearly defined roadmap. A decrease in UNRWA's provision of services can only backfire on the peace process itself if it is to come in the months ahead.

The administrative changes, which I referred to in my opening remarks, that if UNRWA's operations transferred from HQ in Vienna to Gaza, were for us and still remain a source of hope that the regional understanding of the regional dimension of this issue will be brought home effectively to all those concerned. We hope that this shift is not regarded in terms of purely internal U.N. priorities. We hope that this move will not jeopardise the essential mandate of UNRWA as an agency in the service of Palestinian refugees wherever they reside.

At present, efforts are being exerted to promote prospects for new opportunities in the area. President Arafat refers to Jordan as the Palestinian twin. It is in the spirit of our twin interests, and by "interest" I define the public good of Palestinian refugees, that I have spoken with this candour and with this objectivity. It is governments, with all due respect, who are planning and undertaking steps in order to promote investments, domestic and foreign, and to encourage joint ventures. What is envisaged is supposed to create new jobs, reduce the rate of unemployment and hence of poverty, without discrimination.

We believe in reinforcing the implementation of this vision. We hope that UNRWA can develop a planned time horizon and scope that can cope with peace building and the peace building era without prejudice to the resolution of the demographic component of the conflict. Human development resources must be given a priority under whichever name, whether politically correct or otherwise; we must empower men and women to cope with the accelerated progress of the modern age which forms a cornerstone for alleviating unemployment. Backing and support are a must for such planning to be undertaken by UNRWA, and coordination amongst us all is vital. Assistance to UNRWA must be in harmony with the overall vision of a better future for the people of this region. UNRWA has Jordan's support, in the hope that meanwhile, concrete steps are undertaken to resolve the refugee problem in a manner that meets their expectations and compensates for their suffering.

Stability in our region requires all of us to cooperate to give UNRWA, the countries of the region and the Palestinian refugees a chance to enjoy peace and its dividend.

Regent urges focus on refugees

(Continued from page 1)

future has in store for them." This uncertainty is exacerbated, he stated, by the ambiguous future of the UNRWA mandate even though this was reduced somewhat through the recent three-year extension of the mandate.

But, the Regent said, "this extension is too short for any reasonable agenda for the implementation of a complex programme of return, compensation, rehabilitation, absorption..."

Refugees now served by UNRWA number 3.2 million, scattered among Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza, Lebanon and Syria.

Citing a 1994 report that focused on refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon, Prince Hassan told participants: "The living conditions of Palestinians have significantly deteriorated due to reduced UNRWA budgets, a serious reduction in financial support from the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation), reduced remittances from Palestinians in the Gulf states, rapid population growth, and in

Lebanon the continuance of war."

The report concluded: There is no hope for a durable peace in the Middle East until there is a comprehensive solution to the refugee issue.

"The refugee problem," the Regent reminded participants, "constitutes one of the major elements of the Arab-Israeli conflict."

In addition, Prince Hassan said that "a decrease in UNRWA's provision of services essential for satisfying basic human needs, at this juncture, can only backfire on the peace process itself."

The main thrust of this year's meeting is to present to major donor and host countries UNRWA's proposals on the "Harmonisation of UNRWA Services: Challenges and Progress."

Harmonisation between the agency's and host countries' services is called for because of the region's more recent dramatic developments.

In this regard, Mr. Hansen said: "We are undergoing massive changes in the environment and we have to respond to these changes. We need to have a vision."

During the two-day meeting, 24 speakers are scheduled to address the

gathering. Two separate working groups on Wednesday dealt with harmonisation and financing respectively. The agency's budget deficit, which reached \$8 million by the end of the 1994-95 fiscal year, was expected to top the agenda.

Iraq says

(Continued from page 1) succeed based on protecting its sovereignty, national unity and its people's dignity," the cabinet said.

"But if there is continued

American and British interference in these talks, the United States and Britain will assume responsibility for their failure," it said.

"The interference amounts to illegal behaviour and contains malicious political goals," the cabinet said. The cabinet hailed to stand

of the other 13 members of the U.N. Security Council, "which condemned the American and British interference and their behaviour against the aims and charter of the United Nations."

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said on Mon-

day he was trying to reconcile two concepts in resolution: the strict control of distributing humanitarian goods and language on Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Iraq has insisted that the United Nations use a draft accord reached on April 10, during a third round of talks, but the text later was extensively changed with proposals submitted by the United States and Britain.

Diplomats, however, said it was unlikely that U.N. negotiator Hans Corell could discard the U.N.-British proposals and go back to an earlier draft text. Whether the fourth round of oil-for-food talks to be held this year will conclude with a deal remains in question.

"I believe it is our task now to unscramble a memorandum, which was crushed by America and Britain. I don't know whether we will ever be able to do that, but we will give it our best," Mr. Anbari said.

Although the last round of talks in April lasted more than two weeks, the current session is expected to be shorter. Dr. Ghali is due to arrive in Moscow on May 15 and Mr. Anbari said he expected the talks to end before then.

Jordan, Egypt sign agreements

(Continued from page 1)

"There are still many areas of cooperation that need to be explored between the two countries," added Mr. Janzouri.

The two prime ministers, the Egyptian delegation that accompanied Mr. Janzouri to the joint committee meeting and several Jordanian ministers and officials left for Cairo after the press conference to join His Majesty King Hussein, who arrived there from Germany for talks with President Hosni Mubarak (see separate story).

In their comments at the press conference Mr. Janzouri and Mr. Kabarti indicated that there was no fundamental difference in the positions of Jordan and Egypt on issues of vital importance to the

Arabs, such as the Palestinian issue and the situation in Iraq.

The Egyptian premier said his country, "despite the 10 years of boycott" by Arab countries after it signed a separate peace treaty with Israel in 1978, "was never away from Arab causes and interests."

He said Egypt was the first Arab country to condemn the recent Israeli assault on Lebanon and to call for an immediate end to the Jewish state's blitz and the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 425.

Mr. Kabarti said Jordan and Egypt were "committed to ensuring that the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians arrives at a satisfactory settle-

ment... because the Palestinian issue is the crux of the Middle East conflict."

The Egyptian premier said a meeting of King Hussein, Egyptian President Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat would take place soon and it would be a "message to all those within and outside the region that the main issue for the past 50 years is the Palestinian cause."

Mr. Kabarti said the final status negotiations which the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel launched this week were arduous and difficult and could be prolonged, but the Arabs had a responsibility to ensure that the process is successful. "We hope to coordinate

efforts for Arab and international support for the Palestinian negotiators to shorten the period and to overcome obstacles so that an agreement could be reached soon to allow the Palestinian (National) Authority to advance from its current status to a state with Jerusalem as its capital," said Mr. Kabarti.

Mr. Janzouri said Jordan and Egypt had identical views on many other political issues, including the "need to fight terrorism in all its forms and to make the Middle East region free of weapons of mass destruction."

On Iraq, Mr. Janzouri said Egypt, like Jordan, was seeking to help alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people as a result of the sweeping

trade sanctions imposed on their country in 1990 but that Cairo opposed any effort to divide Iraq.

"Any change (of regime) in Iraq is an issue that concerns the Iraqi people only and no country should intervene in it," he said in reply to another question.

Answering questions on other issues, Mr. Kabarti said it was natural that the European Union (EU) seeks a larger role in the Middle East peace process in view of its strategic interests.

"The role of the European Union should not be limited to economic assistance," he said. The EU should play a larger role to help the Middle East "enter an era of stability."

Omani five-year plan to lure \$18.4 billion

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Oman expects its new five-year development plan to attract 7.086 billion riyals (\$18.4 billion) in investment in oil, gas and other sectors, an Omani official said Wednesday.

"According to projections for the 1996-2000 development plan, the total public and private investment will reach 7.086 billion Omani riyals," said Mohammad Al Khusaibi, secretary general of the national economy ministry.

He said national investments were forecast at around 4.79 billion riyals (\$12.45 billion) and foreign capital, covering both direct and indirect investment, at 1.4 billion riyals (\$3.64 billion).

The rest will be provided through foreign loans, which are expected to reach a total of 1.28 billion riyals (\$3.3 billion), he added.

Mr. Khusaibi said the investment would cover a \$7 billion gas liquefaction project, development of the oil sector and other fields.

Oman, a non-OPEC oil producer with an output of around 850,000 barrels per day, approved its fifth development plan in January. Officials said the plan would give priority to reforms and development of the non-oil sector.

Spending through the plan was projected at 10.09

billion riyals (\$26.23 billion) compared with 10.8 billion riyals (\$28 billion) in the previous plan. The cut in expenditure slashed the budget deficit to \$1.39 billion from \$5.82 billion.

Like other Arab Gulf oil producers, Oman has been involved in reforms, including privatisation, to cushion the impact of weak crude prices and tackle deficits in its budget and balances of payments. It has also been forced to borrow from the local and foreign markets to finance reforms.

Mr. Khusaibi put Oman's external debt at around 1.45 billion riyals (\$3.77 billion). But he said the government was committed to its policy not to exceed a loan ceiling of 1.5 billion riyals (\$3.9 billion).

"Such a loan ceiling for the fifth development plan will not be exceeded ... for example, the loans expected to be received this year according to the plan will be around 277 million riyals (\$720.2 million) but those expected to be paid are also 277 million riyals," he said.

Oman expects \$29 billion in LNG income

Oman expects to earn nearly \$29 billion from sales of liquefied natural gas from its first LNG project, an Omani official said in

remarks published Wednesday.

Around \$12.4 billion will come from the upstream part of the project, involving production and supply of gas to the plant in the port of Sur, said Salim Ibn Shaaban, oil ministry undersecretary.

The rest will be generated from the export of six million tonnes of LNG annually during the project's 20-year period, he told local newspapers.

Mr. Shaaban said the upstream project was fully owned by the government while the second part was a joint venture with foreign partners.

The project, Oman's first LNG industry, will cost around \$7 billion and is expected to be commissioned in 2000.

"The engineering contract, including the supply of equipment, will be awarded in September," Mr. Shaaban said.

Oman, a Gulf oil producer outside OPEC, has signed a long-term contract with South Korea to supply it with four million tonnes of LNG per year. It is also negotiating similar deals with Japan, Taiwan and other countries.

The LNG project was planned three years ago to tap the country's reserves of natural gas, estimated at 750 billion cubic metres (25 trillion cubic feet).

OECD donors set new goals for development aid

PARIS (AFP) — Key Western donor countries and Japan set here Tuesday goals for development aid over the next two decades, based on the notion of a "global partnership" between donors and aid recipients.

A high-level meeting of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), in what United States foreign aid chief Brian Atwood described as a "breakthrough", adopted a series of six targets to be achieved by 2015.

A report adopted by cooperation ministers and aid agency heads from 21 donor countries in the 26-nation Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as well as the European Union (EU) commission stressed the "self-interest" of developed nations in fostering prosperity in developing countries.

"Development matters", but aid "will only work where there is a shared commitment of all the partners. Success takes time and sustained international and local efforts," it said.

The document recognised the need to "sustain and increase" the volume of official development assistance (ODA) in order to "reverse the growing marginalisation of the poor." It said "domestic preoccupations" in donor countries — an allusion to widespread budget deficit-cutting — should not be allowed to "jeopardise the international development effort."

The report said DAC ministers and aid agency heads were proposing "a global development partnership effort" with a set of "ambitious" goals which were achievable over the next two decades:

— "A reduction by one-half in the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015."

— "Universal primary education in all countries by 2015."

— "A reduction by two-thirds in the mortality rate for infants and children under age five and a reduction by three-fourths in maternal mortality, all by 2015."

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THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

"I don't need to go on a diet. I'm only fat when I look in the mirror!"

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, MAY 10, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Seek out older individuals today whose ideas are different from yours and can do something worthwhile for you. Later tonight you can garner the information you need for an important new project.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You are inspired how to have a more abundant life at this time, so plan it today and put your best ideas to work quickly. Later tonight a knowledgeable individual will be able to help you on an important new career activity.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A dynamic fellow associate can do something nice for you today since you have rendered a favour in the past, so accept readily. Later tonight you can go out on the town with your mate and loved ones for some good times.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Do that seemingly dull routine career activity efficiently and enthusiastically and gain fine benefits for the days ahead. Later tonight you can receive some vital information concerning a new project from a bigwig.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Be happy at this time with the one you have been romancing for some time and show that you are devoted to him or her. Later tonight you will receive from a bigwig the necessary information needed for an important project.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You have career activities to do at home today and complete them before evening and then you will be satisfied with what you have accomplished. Later tonight you can go out on the town with some close friends.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Early today make appointments and keep them on time and you will get good results thereby. Take time later tonight to close friends and loved ones for some good times which you will receive in the days ahead.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A project you had put aside can today be picked up again and made profitable at this time. Become more economical with expenses in your house and you can receive much praise by those who dwell there.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Pursue that goal you had put aside and reach it successfully at this time to make your life easier. Socialise with a bigwig who has some special career activity in mind for you which will give you much success.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) By adding application, you can at this time rid yourself of some situation which is very limiting. Channel your energies towards a new project which will give you much success and some extra funds for the days ahead.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Although a friend usually takes too much of your time, listen carefully to suggestions given to you. They can be helpful at this time for your success on any career activities which you are currently involved in.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Gain more prestige today by handling some public duty well and higher-ups will be appreciative. Avoid oversteering on recreations with your loved ones or you will find yourself without funds for the lean times.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, MAY 9, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Wright Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Your intuitive perceptions should be well combined with your good judgment today so that you can make daily routines profitable and you can be successful in the eyes of an important individual in charge.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A trip may be necessary today in order to tie up some new deal in which you have an interest, so don't delay this or there could be difficulty with a bigwig. Later tonight go out on the town with your loved ones.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Look to an expert organizer for help today in getting your worldly affairs in fine order. A bigwig can be of assistance in the completion of a new project which will make you successful in the days ahead.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Deal with your fellow associates in a more businesslike fashion today and get better results with them. Later tonight you will receive some important information on a new project which will give you prestige and more money.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Garner further information with regard to career activities in which you are engaged in at this time. Avoid heavy traffic while driving on the highway and go out with some good friends for some good times.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Be with a cheerful friend if you want to have a good time today and go to the right places for recreation. Later tonight will be especially for your loved ones by your career activities on a new project.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Try to please all who dwell under your roof and show that you are devoted to them. Purchase some new appliances for your home today for your loved mate and he or she will be very much appreciative of the gesture.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Get into the same pleasures today which your fellow associates enjoy and you will be appreciated more. Answer all letters which are presented to you at this time for any correspondence will be quite beneficial to your success.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You have a chance to garner more of the fine things of life today, so get busy and do so. Be enthusiastic about some new career activity in which you are involved in at this time and you can be very prosperous.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Those who understand your ambitions can at this time give you the boost you need in such directions which will be very beneficial towards your success. Later tonight go out on the town with some close friends.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Sit down today and figure out how far you have gotten towards reaching your goals. One who admires you give you fine suggestions on a new project which will give you great success when you have completed the task.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Try to decide today which of your friends like you for yourself and those who are merely using you for their gain. Later tonight you can go out on the town with your loved ones and have a really good time.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

Cash-strapped Arab League creates commission to push for dues

CAIRO (AFP) — The cash-strapped Arab League created a commission Tuesday to press delinquent member countries to help pay the organisation's deficit, totalling over \$110 million.

The head of the league financial department Mohammad Al Sayed said the league's permanent delegates decided to create the commission, which will consist of three member-nation foreign ministers, not yet decided.

The commission will "make contacts with member nations who have not settled their yearly dues" with the pan-Arab organisation, Mr. Sayed said.

The delegates held Tuesday a third day of meetings called to prepare for an emergency league session on June 9 to examine the deficit which is expected to reach \$114.8 million this year.

The delegates backed a number of proposals, including "a freeze in new hiring and in the activities of some representation offices abroad," Mr. Sayed said, adding the league would not fire any employees reduce salaries.

The talks were continuing Wednesday because some league members have disputed the total amount of past dues they owe, he said.

The league said in March it expected a \$8.8 million deficit in its annual budget.

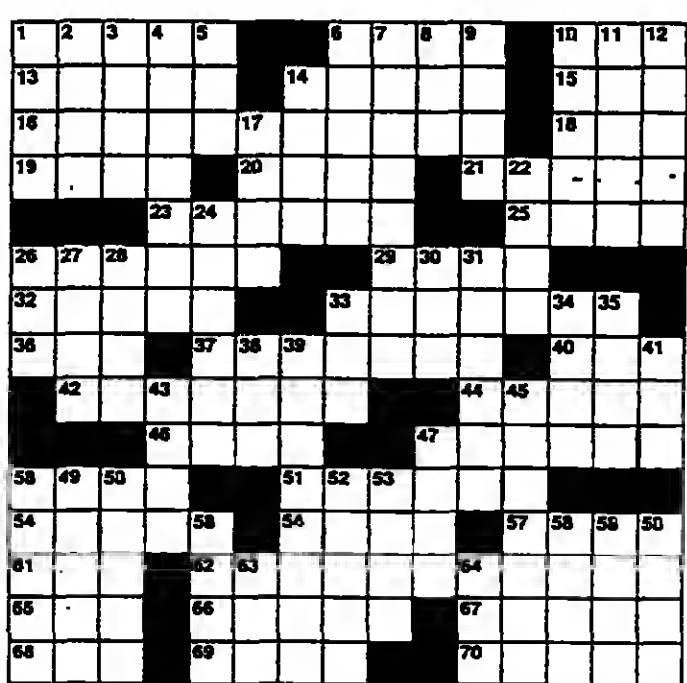
The organisation is already in arrears from previous years to the tune of \$106 million, due to the failure by most of the league's 22 members to pay.

Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates have all paid up for 1996, while Kuwait, Algeria and Libya have paid part of their dues.

The deficit prevented the league from paying its employees salaries for the last three months of 1995 and has already forced the closure of several offices abroad.

THE Daily Crossword by James Barrick

- ACROSS**
- Credit and calling
 - Shool
 - Extinct bird
 - Woodwinds
 - One of a flight
 - Small cobra
 - Vegetable preparation
 - Severely sharp cold
 - Ogled
 - Writer Ephron
 - One of the Fords
 - N.Y.'s — Island
 - Unearthly
 - Assume
 - Spheres
 - Otherwise called
 - Covetousness
 - Pen of Eur.
 - Kin Te Kanawa, for one
 - Meria
 - Well-liked
 - Proprietor
 - Mimes
 - Hold fast
 - Climb a rope
 - Far from dense
 - Freight
 - Facilitate
 - Lat. abbr.
 - Make inquiry
 - Things bought and sold
 - Itinerary: abbr.
 - "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" playwright
 - Worn out
 - Nounshed
 - Sunbeams
 - Discover



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Yesterday's puzzle solved

SHED ABATE CAEN
PEAR FLUES ORNE
ERISE LOTSOFLOTS
GREISS NOT AIMAT
SCADSOFSCADS
ALLUTE NET
RACEME ESSENE
TIMET ORAD
AERATE REPIRE
AGO BET CAIN
RAFTSOFRRAFTS
ALLIAS AIR ATRIA
GOBSOFGOBS OUST
EVES RETIE ANINE
SIERE ASSET TETE

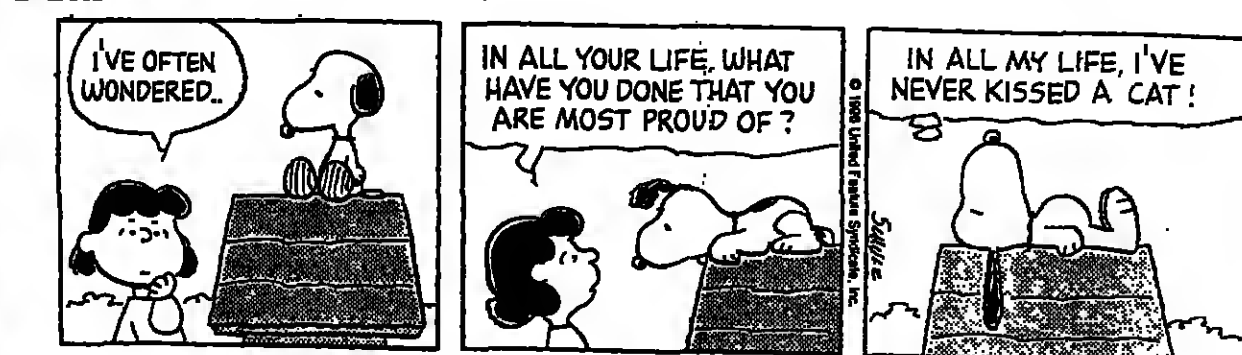
- DOWN**
- Shelter for birds
 - "It's —"
 - City on the Tiber
 - Salt lake near Israel
 - Jat letters
 - Gape
 - Famed lover
 - Island

- Bring to bay
- Cleat's house
- Willow used in basketry
- Put on
- Blemish
- even keel
- Lucy's husband
- Even chance
- Spigot
- Drooping on one side
- Metric weight
- Conducted
- Ponders moodily
- Opp. of dep.
- Woody stem
- At any time
- Cry at a bullfight
- Man in the street
- Before
- Sharp pain
- Coax
- Neighborhood
- Babushka
- Dispatch
- Annoyed

- Walks back and forth
- Tennis great
- Khayyam
- At full —

- Vast place
- Season of penitence
- Guidonian note
- Xanthippe, e.g.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



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Tourism in Lebanon takes beating in Israeli-Hizbollah war

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanon's post-war efforts to rebuild its tourism industry took a heavy beating during Israel's operation Grapes of Wrath, costing hotels alone \$150 million, but operators are determined to overcome this new setback.

Israel's April 11-27 offensive delayed by nearly a month the opening in Beirut of Horeca, a major fair devoted to the hotel and restaurant industry, and forced hundreds of tourists and businessmen to cancel trips to Lebanon.

"The tourism ministry was to reveal its master plan for the future of tourism in Lebanon at the fair but since it was delayed we don't know if the results will be announced," said Jumana Salame of Horeca.

"The military operation had a negative effect on tourism but I think that there is a strong Lebanese will to overcome and move ahead to restore our role as a prime tourist destination. We're still out there," she said.

Pierre Achkar, president of the hotel syndicate in Lebanon, said "economic revival cannot live in the shadow of occupation" — a reference to 1,000 Israeli troops who have occupied a buffer zone in south Lebanon since 1985.

Mr. Achkar estimated the losses for Lebanon's hotel industry at some 100,000 beds during the 16-day operation and \$150 million. He said tourism generated \$710 million in 1995.

"The repercussions would have been greater if the

aggression had continued," he said, hailing the international effort that led to the April 27 U.S.-brokered ceasefire between Israel and Hizbollah.

According to Mr. Achkar a group of 200 French tourists landed in Beirut airport just before the truce went into effect. "That means a lot when 200 people show faith in us. That can only help give us faith in ourselves," he said.

"Things are picking up slowly but surely and the Arabs, who have grown accustomed to the situation in Lebanon, are returning," he added.

For Raffi Gabriellian of the Sonar Travel Agency, the Israeli onslaught cast a shadow over tourism at all levels — hotels, tour operators, restaurants — for the

months of April, May and June.

"Our agency had 80 cancellations for the month of May. We had expected tourists from France and Greece, Armenians mostly. The group was to attend the 'Meron,' a ceremony held every seven or eight years during which oil is blessed and then distributed throughout the international Armenian Orthodox community."

Mr. Raffi said he tried to encourage the group to come but was told: "They still don't trust security in Lebanon."

Nadim Safa, front officer manager at the Cavalier Hotel in Beirut, which was a war-torn hole for the foreign press corps during Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war, said it was business as usual. "We

were full up with the press and had to turn back many journalists," Mr. Safa said.

But the hotel also suffered 100 cancellations from businessmen and tourists, mainly Europeans.

"Nevertheless we're back in business, certainly not at 100 per cent but let's say it's around 40 to 50 per cent of our capacity," he said.

Mr. Safa recalled one group of French tourists who narrowly escaped an Israeli helicopter attack on a bakery — it was hit 15 minutes after they had stopped there on their way back from the southern port of Sidon.

"They freaked out when they saw the pictures on television and the next day, a Sunday, they all packed up and left," Mr. Safa said.

"It's the same, each year at this time Israel carries out military operations against Lebanon to hurt the tourism season," he said.

According to Lebanese economists, 2.4 million tourists visited Lebanon in 1974, when the country boasted 569 hotels, most of which were subsequently destroyed or have become squats for refugees.

Tourism ministry figures for 1995 put the number of hotels at 218 with 350,000 tourists visiting Lebanon, contributing 12 per cent of the gross national product.

On May 1 the U.S. Marriott Hotel opened its doors as planned in southern Beirut, becoming the first new five-star hotel to open in the war-battered Lebanese capital since the end of the civil conflict.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

FOR WEDNESDAY 08/05/1996

COMPANY NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRANS.	VALUE TRADED JD	OFFER PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
ARAB BANK	12.3	1.58	7	280	62730	224.00	224.00	-
JOR. NATL. BK.	12.5	3.15	8	400	1780	4.44	4.45	0.01
IND. DEV. BK.	5.4	5.87	7	1530	3622	2.35	2.37	0.02
THE SEC.	12.1	3.06	1	1000	4510	6.60	4.51	0.09
JOR. KAWAT	21.0	0.00	1	8000	14500	2.89	2.90	0.01
JOR. GULF	8.7	0.00	19	80800	85522	1.05	1.05	0.01
ARAB JOR. INV.	19.8	0.00	2	3475	13898	3.70	3.70	-
JOR. ISLAMIC	19.5	3.00	12	3950	15797	4.00	4.00	-
UNION RE. INV.	23.7	1.00	1	8000	13900	2.80	2.82	0.02
THE SECURITIES	11.1	0.00	2	750	1753	2.45	2.45	-
REIT AL-HAL (REITERS)	1.6	5.91	1	200	808	2.42	2.54	0.12
ARMAN BANK JOR.	9	0.00	63	77000	36180	4.49	4.47	0.02
WELFARE BANK JOR.	9	0.00	6	2000	3795	1.24	1.24	0.00

MARKET TOTALS INDEX: 179.01 CHG: -0.22 121 182585 257891

INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 123.63 CHG: 0.00 1 100 310

1.960	1.930	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.2	7.41	47	32184	51818	1.62	1.62	-
1.940	1.140	THE SECURITIES BK.	8.5	0.00	1	100	148	1.49	1.46	0.01
2.000	4.800	ARAB INTL. HOTELS	17.0	3.00	2	400	2000	2.15	2.00	0.15
3.830	1.190	NATL. PORTFOLIO	0	0.00	5	2658	5236	1.46	1.43	0.03
2.610	1.790	MID. EAST HOTELS	91.3	0.00	6	145080	208938	2.11	2.12	0.01
2.660	2.080	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	12.6	6.28	9	3526	11829	3.10	3.15	0.05
1.410	1.980	ZAKA EXCHANGE	9	0.00	2	2750	2732	1.00	0.99	0.01
1.200	1.320	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	67	454966	508072	1.11	1.17	0.06

SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 119.23 CHG: -0.68 159 642741 890544

1.930	1.160	ATTACHMENT	0.00	0.00	8	6500	8125	1.25	1.25	-
4.120	3.390	JOR. CHEMIST FACT.	20.4	2.80	14	9332	33462	3.59	3.57	0.02
2.750	2.800	JOR. PHARMACEUTICALS	33.9	0.00	2	750	2388	3.15	3.15	-
6.030	4.750	ARAB POTASH CO.	16.4	3.64	8	5000	7279	5.40	5.40	-
11.150	8.900	JOR. PETROLEUM REFINERY	13.4	12.6	13	1268	12658	9.98	9.98	-
1.470	3.780	ARAB PHARM. IND.	21.7	5.06	12	2298	9053	3.95	3.95	-
6.450	5.800	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	8.0	2.91	1	900	5760	6.45	6.40	0.05
2.350	2.600	GENERAL MINING	8.0	9.58	1	200	636	2.40	3.13	0.73
8.840	3.400	DAR ALADANA DV. INV.	14.1	3.93	4	400	3093	5.60	5.23	0.37
1.110	1.380	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	7.41	3	225	203	1.22	1.35	0.13
1.450	850	NATIONAL ZINC	12.4	7.14	39	22530	19033	8.88	8.84	0.04
2.950	1.060	EXPANDED PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	18	5021	6512	1.29	1.30	0.01
1.340	830	JOR. ROCKWELL IND.	9	0.00	1	1000	2940	99	98	0.01
5.000	2.650	ROYAL CARPET MANUFACT.	20.1	0.00	3	300	850	3.34	3.30	0.04
2.580	1.080	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	22.1	0.00	3	600	713	1.21	1.18	0.03
3.650	2.440	OLIV. PROD. IND.	7.4	8.23	3	830	1339	3.46	2.43	0.02
2.480	1.380	JOR. IND. REFINERIES	30.5	0.00	67	23890	38336	1.65	1.63	0.02
2.100	1.000	JOR. RE. CARPET CO.	31.0	0.00	4	950	1081	3.14	3.14	-
1.670	1.180	INTL. TOBACCO	9	0.00	46	14450	49937	3.04	2.08	0.04
2.660	1.180	UNION CH. & VEC.	33.7	0.00	35	53730	66317	1.27	1.27	-
					2	762	1043	1.32	1.37	0.05

INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 117.73 CHG: -0.39 252 317987 280162

GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 140.22 CHG: -0.27 618 1143413 128711

PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 08/05/1996

940	700	JOR. TRADE FAC.	19.7	0.00	4	6780	4975	73	74	0.01
1.000	760	UNION INV. SOF	86.6	0.00	18	14780	4582	80	81	0.01
1.890	630	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	34	28600	22121	78	78	-
2.400	340	JOR. IND. REFINERY	9	0.00	20	29900	7568	57	58	0.01
2.130	1.380	NATL. CHEMICAL	9	0.00	13	7760	12368	1.88	1.60	0.02
920	520	ARAB INTL. INV. IND.	9	0.00	1	250	145	60	58	0.02
1.100	700	NATL. MULT. IND. REFIN.	9	0.00	44	23924	17661	78	78	-
1.150	590	KARAK OILS & MOULDS	9	0.00	1	200	124	63	62	0.01
1.970	900	JORDAN STEEL	9	0.00	27	41322	39319	95	96	0.01
1.030	670	MID-EAST STEEL	751	9	9	5663	2407	97	99	0.02
1.860	1.100	UNION TOBACCO 751	9	0.00	8	4000	3860	1.23	1.21	0.02
1.030	680	ROYAL PHARM. SOF	9	0.00	2	1100	120	70	70	-
1.970	870	INDUS. ENG.	20.7	0.00	1	250	152	60	61	0.01
1.220	880	INDUS. CERAMIC	9	0.00	3	1000	920	92	92	-
1.050	480	TEXTILE MANUF.	9	0.00	5	2012	1157	99	97	0.02
1.020	660	PEARL SAN. P. CONV.	9	0.00	3	500	375	57	57	-
1.500	700	MID-EAST COMPLEX	8.7	0.00	24	14050	10397	75	74	0.01

GRAND TOTAL 218 164011 128378

↑ : New 12 months low
↓ : Stock dividend during the past 12 months
* : Listed during the past 12 months
P : P/E ratio is 100 or more
N : Negative P/E
E : Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year

Egypt sells off first state company on stock market

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypti privatised one of its biggest construction firms in the first near-complete sale of a state company on the stock exchange, the head of the company told AFP Wednesday.

Buying of the surprise stock release closed Tuesday on the Cairo bourse after investors soaked up the full 75 per cent allotment of shares in Mediot Nasr Construction, said head of the board Taher Maghrebi.

"This is the first privatisation of a public sector company on the stock market" in Egypt's ambitious economic reform programme launched in 1991, Mr. Maghrebi said.

The sale, which opened Sunday, originally covered only 10 per cent of shares, half of which were reserved for the company's 650 employees.

But investors bought up all the shares within two hours of opening and "there was enough demand on the first day to cover nearly all the company's shares," Mr. Maghrebi said.

So Prime Minister Kamal Al Gazarti decided Monday to put the total 75 per cent on the market. Mr. Maghrebi said, adding, "if we had put 100 per cent they would have all sold."

The 400,000 shares sold valued 195 million Egyptian pounds (\$57 million), bought up by Egyptian investors and foreigners through brokers, he said.

"This shows the seriousness of the government in pursuing privatisation," he said.

Mediot Nasr Construction, founded in 1959 by the president Gamal Abdul Nasser, built the Cairo neighbourhood of the same name, one of Nasser's biggest urban expansion projects in the Egyptian capital.

Egypt has sold off only 24 of 314 public-sector companies since it began its privatisation plan in 1991. Only three companies have been completely privatised — the Pepsi Cola and Coca Cola bottling firms and a small mechanics company — which were sold in 1993 through negotiations with private investors.

In January the government announced a plan to sell off another 14 companies completely and 46 others partially, most of them through the stock market.

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JORDAN TIMES
TEL: 699634/684311

DAILY BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

Government takes half of the sales income earned by the General Investment Company

★ ★ NET PROFIT generated by the General Investment Company last year amounted to JD 1.43 million of which JD 510,000 will be distributed to shareholders at a rate of 15 per cent in accordance with the recommendation of the board of directors and the approval of the general assembly. Board Chairman Fouad Abu Jaber told the shareholders that the company was able to increase sales by six per cent to reach JD 6.25 million. Of this amount, JD 6.25 million. Of this amount, JD 2.95 million or nearly half of the sales figure, was taken by the government in the form of sales tax and income tax amounting to JD 2.16 million and JD 791,600 respectively. In 1994, the consumption fees (or sales tax paid on the company's products) amounted to JD 1.96 million.

Dr. Abu Jaber said the company has started production from a new and modern line bought from Germany's Krutz at a cost of JD 2.5 million. The shareholders equity stood at JD 7.4 million at the end of 1995 (JD 6.58 million in 1994) (Al Aswaq).

Government hikes prices of fuel oil and asphalt

★ ★ A DECISION issued by the Minister of Supply has set higher prices of petroleum products used in generating electric power by companies which utilise fuel for electricity. The higher prices, which were ordered based on a recommendation from the minister of energy and mineral resources and an approval by the Council of Ministers, ranged between an increase of 7.5 to 30.8 per cent. Fuel oil sold to the Jordan Electricity Authority and the Irbid District Electricity was raised by 17 per cent from JD 49 per tonne to JD 57.7 per tonne. To all other consumers, the price of fuel oil was increased by 13.3 per cent from JD 64 to JD 72.5 per tonne. Prices of asphalt were also hiked as bulk asphalt went up by 7.5 per cent from JD 60 to JD 64.5 per tonne and barrels filled with asphalt carried a new tag of JD 85 per tonne, a 30.8 per cent rise over the previous price of JD 65.

According to a government official, the new prices were necessary to achieve a balance between low local prices on one hand and the high prices of fuel oil on the international level. Moreover, he said, the prices were hiked to fulfill repeated demands by the World Bank for increasing prices of electricity and petroleum products which have a direct relationship with industries and to have prices equivalent to the new electricity charges. The official strongly denied that there is an intention to hike prices of diesel or gasoline, but he hinted that prices of kerosene and butane gas are under study as they are extremely low compared to the import price (Al Ra'i).

Financial Markets

in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Closing 7/5/96	Tokyo Closing 8/5/96
Sterling Pound	1.51257	1.51177
Deutsche Mark	1.5107	1.5265
Swiss Franc	1.2445	1.2445
French Franc	5.1550	5.1575
Japanese Yen	105.21	105.27
European Currency Unit	1.2313	1.2312

Source: Reuters
* European Currency Unit (ECU) is the unit of account for the ERM.

Product Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	394.15	8.00	Silver	5.49	0.100

* 25 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 6/5/1996

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
Sterling Pound	1.0626	1.0729
Deutsche Mark	0.4630	0.4653
Swiss Franc	0.5677	0.5705
French Franc	0.1371	0.1378
Japanese Yen	0.6707	0.6741
Dutch Guilder	0.4144	0.4165

* For 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8820	1.8780
Lebanese Lira	0.044525	0.045075
Saudi Riyal	0.1870	0.1895
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.3070	1.3070
Qatari Riyal	0.1935	0.1945
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.

Bulls down Knicks; Utah romp past Spurs

CHICAGO (AP) — The Bulls are running and nothing in the National Basketball Association playoffs has come close to stopping them.

Michael Jordan scored 28 points and Scottie Pippen added 19 as Chicago pulled away in the fourth quarter for a 91-80 victory over New York and a 2-0 lead in their best-of-seven Eastern Conference semi-final.

The Bulls outscored the Knicks 10-0 in a two-minute, 16-second span of the final quarter. Pippen scored five points in the run and Chicago, winners of a record 72 regular-season games, remained unbeaten in the playoffs.

"We made some big plays down the stretch," Jordan said. "Defensively we held them stagnant in the last few minutes. When it came time for us to step it up, we did it."

Jordan said he felt no pain from his sore back, which has required treatments between games.

In the night's only other NBA playoff game, visiting Utah stunned San Antonio 95-75 in the opening game of their Western Conference semi-final. Karl Malone scored 23 points, John Stockton had 13 points and 19 assists.

Chicago's Dennis Rodman pulled down 19 rebounds and scored six points. The new author continued a tradition of pulling off his jersey and throwing it into the crowd after the game, tossing it to a talk show host Tuesday.

The Bulls won game one 91-84, with Jordan scoring 44 points. Games three and four are Saturday and Sunday in New York, scheduled back-to-back for television networks. US television ratings are down for non-Bulls games but at record highs when Jordan and his teammates are shown.

"It favors us," Rodman said of the scheduling. "We want to keep going. I don't want any time off. I'm real intense. I want to go out and play."

Patrick Ewing scored 23 points and John Starks added 12 for New York, which scored only 21 points in the fourth quarter. The Knicks have scored only a combined 76 points in the two second halves against Chicago.

At San Antonio, Utah opened by dominating the Spurs, who dropped their fifth home playoff game in the past seven. The 20-point loss was San Antonio's worst since losing 111-90 at home to Houston in last year's Western Conference finals.

"It was a plain old-fashioned (but) kicking," San Antonio coach Bob Hill said. "Nothing we did worked. I thought they played great and we didn't. Give them credit. We have work to do, but we will be back."

Returning Dream Team Olympians Malone and Stockton combined on a 19-6 opening run and Utah was never caught. Another US Olympian, David Robinson, scored 28 points for the Spurs, who beat the Jazz in three of four regular-season meetings.

Playoff Results
Western Conference Semifinals
Utah 95 San Antonio 75
(Utah leads best-of-seven series 1-0)
Eastern Conference semifinals
Chicago 91 New York 80
(Chicago leads best-of-seven series 2-0)

Reneberg, Wilander advance at U.S. clay court

FINCHURST, North Carolina (R) — Despite being slightly travel weary, fourth seed Rikie Reneberg managed to survive a first-round match against fellow American Chris Woodruff on Tuesday.

The 34th-ranked Reneberg recovered from a disastrous second set to hold off Woodruff 7-5, 6-6, 6-4.

Reneberg only arrived in Finchurst on Monday night after flying from last week's tournament site in Atlanta to Chicago to attend Monday's wake for Tim Gullikson, who died from brain cancer last Friday.

"Obviously, that meant a lot more to me than playing," Reneberg said of his sad journey to Chicago. "It was hard. I thought they had a nice service. It was not easy for anyone."

Moroccan Karim Alami, who won his first career title last week in Atlanta, ran his winning streak to six matches with a 6-2, 6-3 victory over American qualifier Mark Merklein.

Also joining Reneberg in the second round was Swedish veteran Mats Wilander. The former world number one disposed Australian Sandon Stolle 6-4, 6-4 with temperatures dipping into the 60s (18 C).

"I hate this," Wilander said. "Everything is heavy when it's like this cool. The ball dies and the court is pretty dead," complained Wilander.

"I'm playing so-so, but this is the best confidence builder, when you win a match you're not comfortable in."

Olympic torch goes out but quickly relit

SEATTLE (R) — The eternal flame representing the hopes and dreams of Olympic athletes around the world blew out Tuesday on a wind-swept bridge crossing the churning waters of the Tacoma narrows.

Nearly 2,500 miles (4,000 km) into its meandering cross-country U.S. journey, the torch carrying the flame went out when it fell off of a holder on a bicycle crossing the mile-long (1.6 km) suspension bridge between Tacoma and Gig Harbor, Washington.

Torch relay organizers hastened to explain that the Olympic flame itself, ignited on March 30 in Olympia,

Greece, from the rays of the sun, remained unharmed in a safety lantern, where it is guarded 24 hours a day.

"The particular flame of that torch went out but that does not mean the Olympic flame per se went out," said Alexis Davis, a spokeswoman for the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games.

A quick rekindling of the torch was possible because a caravan of vehicles and officials — including the so-called mother flame — accompany the torch carriers along their route.

"The mother flame is the true Olympic flame from which all torches are lit each day," Davis said.

The replacement torch was put on the back of a motorcycle for the remainder of the bridge crossing.

The torch relay began the day in Olympia, Washington, and arrived in Seattle aboard a ferry boat.

After a 16-mile (26 km) run through the city, the flame was to end the day at the Landmark Space Needle, which was to be transformed into a torch itself with a fireworks display from the top of the tower.

The U.S. portion of the torch relay began in Los Angeles on April 27 and is scheduled to travel 15,000 miles.



Jan-Ove Waldner of Sweden throws his paddle after he won the Table Tennis countymate Joergen Persson in Bratislava, May 7 (Reuters Photo)

Waldner wins European Table Tennis Championship

BRATISLAVA (AP) — Olympic Champion Jan-Ove Waldner staked his claim for an Olympic gold in Atlanta, winning on Tuesday the only title to have eluded him in a 15-year career, the European Championship.

The 30-year-old Swede, who was gold medalist at Barcelona, defeated his oldest rival and closest colleague, Joergen Persson.

The pair had already partnered each other to win the team final here on Thursday.

Their previous two world signals confrontations had been shared at one piece.

Tuesday's final could have gone either way, with Waldner losing the first game then trailing 17-19 and 19-20 in the important third game with Persson serving, before he triumphed 16-21, 21-15, 22-20, 21-15.

Uncharacteristically, it was the delicate precision of Waldner's return of serve that led him to victory.

The Swedish champion is better known for his brilliant

serve and follow-up.

Persson has not won a big title for a long time because of a car accident two years ago which injured his back and kept him out of competition.

But against Waldner he proved that he is back to a standard which will make him a medal candidate at the Olympics.

At one point Persson, produced an astounding forehand which went around the table to capture the first game.

He also showed determination in the deciding fourth game, fighting back from 3-10 down to reach 14-16 and remain in contention.

At the end, Waldner's characteristically impassive face was converted into rare expressions of joy, as he tossed his bat in the air and hugged his opponent.

"I have waited a long time," so this was good to win. It was also good to win because there are so many fine players in the European Championships," said Waldner.

Persson humorously countered: "If he takes the European title and I take the Olympics then it is OK. That is the only title I am missing, so if we can make a deal..."

The women's singles was won by the top-seeded German, Nicole Struse, who triumphed 21-6, 21-18, 21-13 against the surprise finalist from Hungary Kristine Toth.

The 22-year-old from Budapest beat the third-seeded China-born German defender Jie Schopp in five games in the morning semi-final, but her left-handed looping style could make little impression on the close-to-the-table biting of Struse.

In the women's event, the real final taken place in the quarter-final clash against the China-born Luxembourgian Ni Xia-Lian, which Struse beat won 21-18 in the final game, before erupting in tears of relief.

Matthaeus ends international career

BONN (R) — Lothar Matthaeus brought a German soccer era to an end on Tuesday when he announced he was quitting international football after nearly 16 years and a record 122 caps.

The 35-year-old, who has not played for Germany since December 1994 because of a nagging Achilles tendon injury, does not want national coach Berti Vogts to consider him for next month's European Championship finals in England and beyond.

Matthaeus, who won his first cap as a 19-year-old at the European Championships in June 1980, seemed relieved that he had finally decided to call it a day after speculation about his place in the squad for Euro '96 in England.

"I've had a good time with the national team. I am happy that I have come to a decision," the Bayern Munich player said. "It's a good decision for both myself and Berti Vogts."

Vogts, who is due to announce his European Championship squad on Monday, has not selected Matthaeus for warm-up games in the past few months. The Bayern midfielder-cum-libero seems to have believed his chances of being selected for the finals were slim.

The former Borussia Moenchengladbach and Internazionale Milan player won 19 more caps than Germany's favorite soccer son Franz Beckenbauer and captained the Germans when they won the World Cup in 1990. He also led the team at the 1994 finals.

But Matthaeus, who has needed two operations on the Achilles tendon injury, knew he had little chance of regaining his place at libero from Borussia Dortmund's Matthias Sammer who has been in superb form during the qualifying campaign.

"It was the right decision to make and I thought a great deal about it," he said. "It was not influenced by other people."

Matthaeus was the powerful dynamo behind Germany's success in the last decade, playing in four World Cups. At the 1994 finals he equalled a record number of 21 appearances in the most important tournament in the world.

He has never had the smooth, graceful image of 1974-World Cup winning captain Beckenbauer who made everything look so easy on and off the field in the 1960s and 1970s.

EURO '96 Defenders will ignore Suker at their peril

ZAGREB (R) — It was Davor Suker's two goals for Croatia which famously sank World Cup runners-up Italy in 1994, cementing his reputation as a "goalkeeper's nightmare" and easing his country towards qualification for Euro '96.

A total of 12 goals in 10 qualifying games — the highest of the entire qualification programme — underlined the left-footed striker's importance to his team and have helped explain Croatia's rapid emergence as a soccer power since its independence from federal Yugoslavia.

Suker, 28, is the national team's top-scorer with 17 goals in as many appearances, while he is still remembered in Seville as the man who eclipsed Diego Maradona.

When the controversial Argentine arrived in Spain after a 15-month ban for cocaine use while playing for Napoli, he was less than flattering about his teammate and suggested to the club's directors they should buy another striker.

As it turned out, it was Maradona who left the club first, allowing Suker to blossom in the Spanish League where he has twice finished

as the season's second-highest scorer since his arrival in 1991.

He duly moved to Real Madrid for \$5 million this January in a deal which took five players in the opposite direction, a reflection of his worth to his new employers.

He is a constant danger at set pieces and, although he can be slow and sluggish, is a master of two-touch football capable of striking from any range.

He started at local club Osijek as the first in a line of goalscorers from the same town which would later include Goran Vlaovic and Igor Cvitanovic.

Together with five other Croatian players he first excelled on the Yugoslav team which won the world under-18 championship in Chile in 1987.

During a 1989-91 stint at Dinamo Zagreb he established himself as an inevitable choice for every national coach by winning the top scorer title in both seasons, notching 34 goals in two seasons to prompt the call from Seville.

Together with Zvonimir Boban and Robert Prosinecki he now forms the core of the national squad.

Athletics stop Indians

OAKLAND (AP) — Mark McGwire hit a three-run homer and Jason Giambi had four singles as the Athletics won their second straight game against Cleveland, defeating the Indians 8-4 Tuesday.

McGwire, who singled in the go-ahead run Monday night as the A's rallied for a 5-3 victory over the Indians, hit his fourth homer of the season in the third inning, a 428-foot blast to center field.

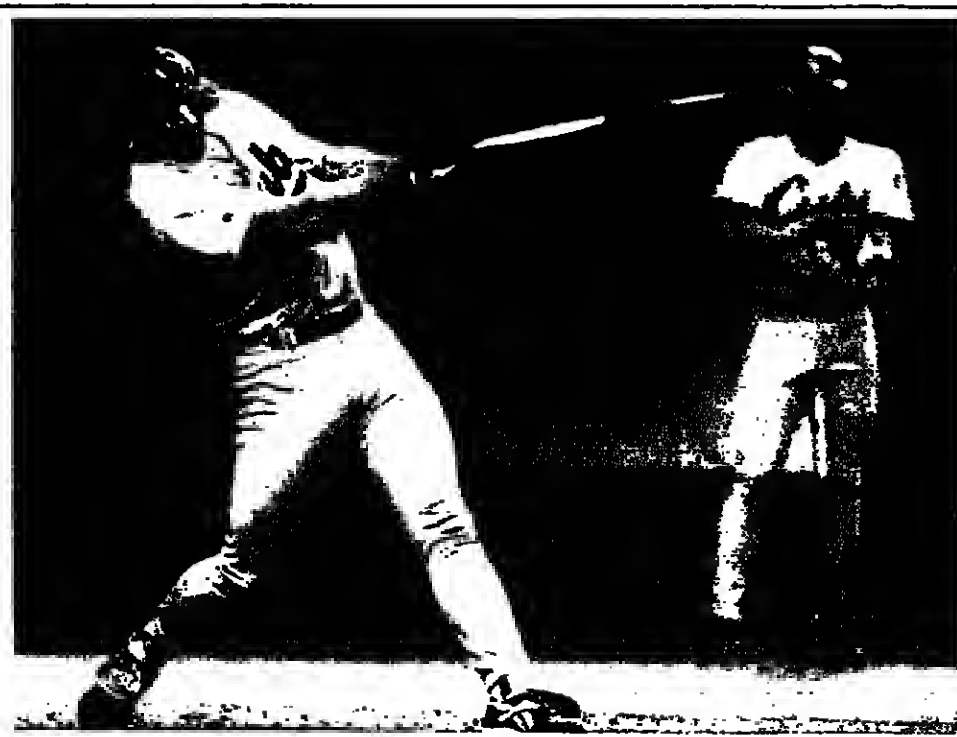
Giambi singled in the first, third, fourth and sixth innings to raise his average to .342. He was intentionally walked in the eighth. Giambi scored in the third on McGwire's homer and drove in a run in the fourth.

The A's got 11 hits off Orel Hershiser (3-3), who allowed four runs in a 4-2-3 inning. Hershiser had won his previous three decisions.

The A's added four runs in the eighth against reliever Julian Tavarez. Ernie Young hit his first homer of the season, Phil Plantier had a two-run double and Terry Steinbach had an RBI single.

Yankees 12, Tigers 5: In New York, Ruben Sierra drove in three runs in an eight-run sixth inning that carried New York past Detroit, giving the Yankees their eighth win in nine games.

With the Yankees trailing 5-1, Sierra drove in the first run in the sixth with a sacrifice fly off Tigers starter



Chicago Cubs' Brian Dorsett breaks his bat on a pitch off Montreal Expos' starting pitcher Tavo Alvarez during third inning action at Olympic Stadium in Montreal, May 7 (Reuters photo)

Felipe Lira, Sierra later singled for two more runs off Mike Myers, the fourth Detroit pitcher in the inning.

Finch-hitter Jim Leyritz had a two-run single off Randy Veres after reliever Richie Lewis (1-2) walked the only two Yankees he faced. New York had six hits and four walks in the inning, which sent the Tigers to their 17th loss in 19 games and fifth in a row.

After Sierra's sacrifice fly, Joe Girardi drew a bases-loaded walk to force home the second run, and Leyritz followed with his two-run single to tie the score 5-5.

Derek Jeter squeezed in another run with a bunt single before an RBI single by Tim Lincecum and the two-run single by Sierra completed the scoring.

combined on a five-hitter and Danny Tartabull hit a two-run homer, leading Chicago over Baltimore.

Fernandez (5-2) gave up five hits and walked three in

eight innings to become the American League's third five-game winner, joining Cleveland's Dennis Martinez and New York's Andy Pettitte. He struck out seven, including home run leader Brady Anderson three times.

day against Colorado.

Chris Hammond (2-5) followed Brown and allowed one run in three innings. Robb Nen pitch two scoreless innings for his sixth save.

Jason Lirnghausen (2-3) gave up three runs and 11 hits

Reds overcome Dodgers

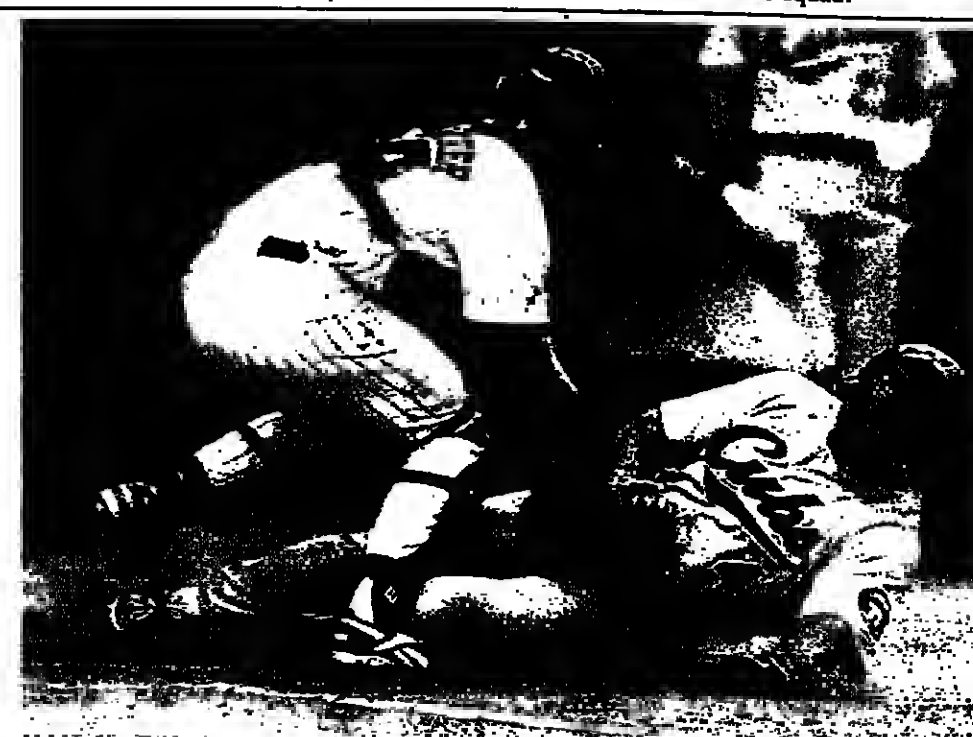
CINCINNATI (AP) — Eric Anthony and Eric Davis hit consecutive homers in the 12th inning Tuesday night, giving the Cincinnati Reds a 3-2 victory over Los Angeles shortly after the Dodgers learned that Brett Butler has throat cancer.

Raul Mondesi's sacrifice fly off Marcus Moore (3-2) had put the Dodgers ahead in the top of the 12th, but Todd Worrell (0-1) had his first major failure of the year.

Cincinnati has won four straight following a nine-game losing streak.

Marlins 3, Mets 2: In Miami, Florida overcame the early departure of injured ace Kevin Brown and won despite stranding 14 runners.

Brown bruised a leg just below his right knee when he was hit by Jeff Kent's sharp grounder in the second inning. He left after pitching three scoreless innings, but X-rays were negative, and Brown is expected to make his next scheduled start Sunday.



Chicago Cubs' Brian McKee is tagged out at home by Montreal Expos' catcher Darrin Fletcher (left) on a fielder's choice single by Brian McKee during fifth inning action at Olympic Stadium in Montreal, May 7 (Reuters photo)

in seven innings.

Expos 8, Cubs 3: In Montreal, Moises Alou and F.P. Santangelo hit two-run doubles in a five-run seventh as Montreal won its fourth straight.

With Montreal trailing 3-2, Terry Adams (1-1) walked Andy Stankiewicz and Mark Grudzielanek. Mike Lansing sacrificed against Doug Jones. Henry Rodriguez was walked intentionally and Alou doubled for a 4-3 lead.

David Segui walked and, one out later, Santangelo doubled to make it 6-3. Dave Silvestri followed with an RBI single. Rodriguez sing-

led home a run in the eighth.

Astros 7, Phillies 5: In Philadelphia, Jeff Bagwell went 4-for-5 and homered twice, and Orlando Miller broke a 5-5, eighth-inning tie with a two-out single.

Bagwell hit an RBI single in the third, tied the score 5-5 with a two-run homer in the seventh off Russ Springer (2-2) and added a solo shot in the ninth off Ken Ryan. He has 12 homers this season, including three in the last two games.

6, Rockies 5: In Atlanta, Atlanta rallied for three runs in the ninth and Javy Lopez doubled in the winning

run in the 10th, giving the Braves their fourth straight win.

Curtis Leskanen (2-1) retired the first two batters in the 10th before David Justice walked and Lopez hit a 3-2 pitch to deep center. Larry Walker leaped against the wall but missed the ball by inches, allowing justice to come all the way around to score. Brad Clontz (1-2) pitched a scoreless 10th.

Giants 4, Cardinals 2: In St. Louis, Matt Williams and Barry Bonds homered as San Francisco stopped a four-game losing streak.

Amman prepares to host Arab Cup Winners' Cup

'Exhausted' Palestinian team plays Faisali in qualifier today

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan Cup champions Al Faisali Thursday meet Palestinian champions Al Shurta in a match the winner of which will qualify to play in the 7th Arab Cup Winners' Cup Championship hosted by Al Wihdat Club May 13-22.

As the two teams battle it out at Amman Stadium, organising committee officials will have their hands full as teams start arriving in Amman Thursday while a coaches and referees clinic got under way with 30 participants from seven Asian countries taking part.

While this will be Al Wihdat's first time in the Cup Winners' Cup, Al Ramtha were the first to represent Jordan in the competition hosted mostly by Gulf Arab countries. Al Faisali have played in the competition three times and are looking ahead to a fourth time provide they win Thursday.

Jordanian results in the past four Cup Winners' Cup participations have not been encouraging as Al Faisali and Al Ramtha failed to score a single win



Minister of State Mohammad Hweimel with participants in the ASF seminar for referees and have two draws and 11 defeats in total.

As Amman gets ready to host one of the most important Arab soccer competitions, the eight competing teams have been divided into two groups. Group 1 includes hosts Al Wihdat, Al Muharraq of Bahrain, Al Riyad of Saudi Arabia, and Olympic Mdyah of Algeria. Group 2 includes Al Itihad of Qatar, Al Mawdah of Sudan, Olympic Khreibkeh of Morocco and the winner of the Faisali-Shurta match.

All competing teams have never won the title or even runner up position. Past champions especially teams from Egypt and Tunisia are missing the

championship notably Olympic Baidawi of Morocco, the championship record holders after winning the title a record three consecutive times.

Hweimel attends ASF seminar

Meanwhile, Minister of State Mohammad Hweimel Wednesday deputised for His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein Chairman of the Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF) at the coaches seminar organised by the Arab Soccer Federation (ASF) on the sidelines of the championship which starts Monday.

ASF Deputy Secretary-

General Walid Kurdi expressed the federation's appreciation of the efforts of Prince Abdullah, the JSF and all concerned with Al Wihdat's hosting of the Arab Cup Winners' Cup. Mr. Kurdi noted that the ASF highly appreciated all efforts exerted in making this Arab sports gathering a success.

Attending FIFA official

CHAMPIONSHIP RECORD

VENUE	CHAMPIONS
Jeddah 1990	Mala'b (Tunisia)
Dubai 1990	Olympic (Morocco)
Jeddah 1993	Olympic (Morocco)
Doha 1994	Olympic (Morocco)
Cairo 1995	Ahli (Egypt)
Tunisia 1995	Al Afriqi (Tunisia)

Heinz Marotzki stressed the importance of holding seminars in Jordan to develop the game. Jordan ranks 147th among 190 countries on the FIFA list.

Al Shurta team arrive after two-day journey

Palestinian champions Al Shurta were the first team to arrive in Amman after a two-day journey. The team left the Gaza Strip Monday but were barred by Israeli police from passing the Beit Hannun (Erez) checkpoint, prompting the delegation to go to Al Arish through Rafah from where the team travelled to Newbeh seaport for a 540 kilometre journey to Aqaba.

The team cancelled their scheduled practice Wednesday after players arrived exhausted for their match against Al Faisali Thursday.



Spanish Conchita Martinez returns a ball to round of Italian Open in Rome May 7. Yugoslav Tatjana Jecmenica during the second round. Martinez won 6-3, 6-2 (Reuters photo)

Martinez begins defence of Italian Open title

ROME (AP) — Conchita Martinez began her quest for a fourth consecutive Italian Open title Tuesday with an easy two-set victory over 17-year-old Yugoslav Tatjana Jecmenica.

The No. 2 seed scored early breaks against the big server in each set to roll to a 6-3, 6-2 victory in a little over an hour.

The youngest player in the tournament, 15-year-old Martina Hingis, looked impressive as she downed Virginia Ruano-Pascual, 6-3, 6-1, in 59 minutes. Making her first appearance at the Foro Italico, the 6th seeded Hingis kept complete control of the match and often rushed the net against an opponent anchored at the baseline.

Still looking for her first tournament title this year, Martinez, 1994 Wimbledon champion, would like to make it Rome. The only other women to win three Italian titles in a row were all-time greats Margaret Court and Chris Evert.

The result of the match with Jecmenica was never in doubt, but Martinez could have wrapped it up even quicker except for some sloppy play. But when she needed a point, the Spaniard always found a line.

"It would create a bit of history being the first player to win it four times," said Martinez.

The Martinez win followed

the \$926,000 tournament's first upsets.

On a roll following a tournament win in Croatia three days ago, Italian surprise Gloria Pizzichini eliminated 10th seeded Petra Bergerow of Germany 6-2, 2-6, 6-4.

No. 14 Joannette Kruger of South Africa fell to Slovakia's Karina Habsudova, 6-2, 6-3 in a second-round match while Florencia Labat of Argentina, the 15th seed, lost a first round match to German Jana Kandarr, 7-6 (8-6), 6-7 (7-1), 6-3.

No. 7 Irina Spirlea beat Slovakia's Radka Zrubakova 6-3, 6-2 to advance to the third round, while France's Nathalie Tauziat, No. 8, scored a 6-1, 6-1 win over Magdalena Grzybowska of Poland. No. 11 Yayuk Basuki of Indonesia beat Slovakian Henrieta Nagyova 7-6 (7-3), 7-5.

After losing six players, Italy finally got someone

through, veteran Sandra Cecchini beat Israeli Anna Smashnova 6-4, 6-3, while Francesca Lubiani downed fellow Italian Laura Garrone by the same score.

In another encounter of unseeded players, France's Alexia Dechaume-Balleat beat Kathy Rinaldi-Stunko of the United States 7-6 (9-7), 6-1.

Top seeded Steffi Graf and No. 3 seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario see their first action a day later.

Sanchez Vicario regained the No. 2 ranking from Martinez when she beat her Spanish rival in the Hamburg final Sunday.

But Martinez gave it no weight.

"We're in Rome," she said. "I'm just thinking of winning my next match."

The clay court tournament is a major warmup for the French Open, the only Grand Slam played on that surface.



Borussia Dortmund's defender Juergen Kohler flies over Bayer Leverkusen's striker Rudi Voeller, in this combination picture, during their first division soccer match May 7. Borussia Dortmund who won 2-0 and will stay first in the



league as an opponent for Bayern Munich, Borussia would have to give away four or five points in the last two games not to win the German soccer championship (Reuters photo)

George Best voted greatest-ever British player

LONDON (R) — George Best was named as the greatest British soccer player of all time on Wednesday following a public poll to mark the start of the build-up to the European Championship.

Best, who played 31 times for Northern Ireland, pipped England's Stanley Matthews for the honour with Bobby Charlton, Best's former Manchester United teammate, coming third.

The accolade came from a poll organised by the Royal Mail who next week issue a set of Euro 96 stamps.

Five other former stars — Dixie Dean, Bobby Moore, Duncan Edwards, Billy Wright and Darryl Blanchflower — were also nominated by the public and will be depicted on the stamps.

As Best, Matthews and Charlton are still alive they cannot feature on the stamps as tradition dictates that members of the royal family are the only living people who can appear on British issues.

Armstrong retains Tour Dupont lead

BRISTOL, Tenn. (R) — While Lance Armstrong rode strategically enough to retain his overall lead for the sixth day, Italian Federico Colonna gave the world's top-ranked cycling team its first stage win at the Tour Dupont Tuesday.

Colonna, 23, who rides for MAPEL-GB of Italy, overtook Canadian Steve Bauer with about 275 yards left in the seventh stage and claimed Wytheville to Bristol road race in four hours, 30 minutes and 34 seconds.

Bauer, whose long history of second-place finishes includes Paris-Roubaix, the Olympic road race and world championships, was second in the same time as Colonna.

American Tyler Hamilton finished the stage, raced in wet and overcast conditions, third, also in the same time.

"I was frightened because I fell in the rain two days ago," said Colonna, who jumped in front after 11 miles, along with Bauer and Hamilton.

"But I wanted to win the stage for the team, so I was willing to take some chances."

The top three finishers, in a group of six, built as much as a 6:30 lead after 68 mile. But the field was able to cut the margin to 2:30 with about 13 miles left.

Armstrong, the defending champion who took the race lead May 2 after winning the second stage, finished 29th in the main field, 1:47 behind the top three.

While riding in periodic rain, Armstrong kept his close, overall contenders in check and still leads Frenchman Pascal Hervé by 2 minutes, 53 seconds with five stages of the 1,225-mile race remaining.

Tour of Italy champion Tony Rominger of Switzerland, the world's second-ranked cyclist, remains third overall, 3:59 behind.

The stage featured a unique finish-line oddity. Cyclists who completed the race on the right side of the road,

finished in Virginia those who finished on the left side of the street found themselves across the border in Tennessee.

Armstrong was content to conserve his energy as the field faces the hardest stage

of the 12-day event Wednesday.

In the 109.6-mile Bristol to Beech Mountain, N.C. road race, cyclists will challenge eight substantial climbs, including a five-mile ascent to the finish.

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* Ace Ventura "2"

Shows: 2, 5:15

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Russia, Britain wrangle over spy-case expulsions

MOSCOW (R) — Russia and Britain appeared on Wednesday to be trying to work out a compromise to end a major spy row that brought a threat of large-scale expulsions of British diplomats and could seriously disrupt good relations.

Russia's state security agency said on Tuesday Moscow wanted the removal of nine British embassy members, charging they were linked to a Russian agent arrested last month.

Britain says the Federal Security Service (FSS) allegations against its diplomats have not been substantiated by Moscow and has given a veiled warning it would retaliate.

In London, Defence Secretary Michael Portillo expressed hope Moscow would hold back, saying Britain did not want anything to jeopardise relations with Moscow.

An expulsion of nine British diplomats, out of a total of more than 80 based in Moscow, would make it by far the worst spy scandal involving the two countries in the post-Soviet era.

No fresh diplomatic contacts were reported between the two powers following Russia's denunciation on Tuesday of British diplomats for "activities incompatible with their status."

The FSB, Russia's counter-

intelligence body which first leaked news of the scandal and has taken a far harder line on the issue than the Foreign Ministry, insisted on Wednesday that some diplomats had to be expelled.

But it suggested the two sides were trying to work out a compromise on the actual number.

"The question of expelling a number of British embassy staff is on the agenda, but at issue is the timescale and the number of diplomats who will be declared persona non grata (unacceptable)," an unnamed source at the FSB told Interfax news agency.

"We did our job. The job of the politicians is to find a solution which most adequately meets the national interests of the Russian Federation," the FSB source said.

Eleven British diplomats and journalists were expelled from the Soviet Union in 1989 in retaliation for London throwing out the same number of alleged Soviet spies.

Russia's Foreign Ministry itself, trying to limit the diplomatic damage to its relations with one of President Boris Yeltsin's powerful Western backers, has declined to confirm that a final decision on the expulsions has been made.

Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov met British Ambassador Andrew Wood

on Tuesday evening but the ministry has so far failed to confirm that any diplomats will be ordered to leave.

The cold war-style row broke with only 40 days to go to Russia's presidential election in which Mr. Yeltsin faces a challenge from Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov.

Some Russian analysts have suggested the unusual fanfare accompanying the espionage row may be linked to the election, with Mr. Yeltsin anxious to be seen taking an anti-Western line to win votes from communists and nationalists.

"As a rule any such expulsion has mainly political reasons behind it," Nikolai Leonov, a former Soviet KGB general, told independent NTV television on Tuesday.

"Counter-intelligence service only detects cases of espionage and reports them to the political leadership," Mr. Leonov said. "It is the political leadership which decides whether and when to use this information for a public scandal."

"They (the communists) accuse the Kremlin of being too pro-Western," he said. "Now there is a chance to show that the Kremlin is independent, it is tough and it is ready to defend national interests even by this (expulsions)."

But a public opinion poll released late Tuesday by Channel 1 television showed Mr. Peres holding on to a four-point lead over Mr. Netanyahu, 52 per cent to 48 per cent, two points down on polls released a week ago.

Independent polls had given Mr. Peres a steady five to seven point lead over this challenger for the past several weeks.

Haaretz said Likud pollsters attributed their secret poll results to a shift towards Mr. Netanyahu by undecided



ANTI-ELECTION HEAT: An ultra-religious Jew hangs an anti-election posture on a washing line in a West Jerusalem neighbourhood on Wednesday. The posture says: "Our holy Torah forbids us from taking part in the four elections" (Reuters photo)

Likud says secret poll shows Netanyahu is ahead of Peres

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A leaked secret opinion poll by the opposition Likud bloc on Wednesday showed party leader Benjamin Netanyahu leading Shimon Peres ahead of a May 29 election for prime minister.

The internal Likud poll, published in the independent daily newspaper Haaretz, put Mr. Netanyahu two points in front of Mr. Peres in the race, the first time any survey has put the conservative politician ahead of the incumbent premier.

But a public opinion poll released late Tuesday by Channel 1 television showed Mr. Peres holding on to a four-point lead over Mr. Netanyahu, 52 per cent to 48 per cent, two points down on polls released a week ago.

Independent polls had given Mr. Peres a steady five to seven point lead over this challenger for the past several weeks.

Haaretz said Likud pollsters attributed their secret poll results to a shift towards Mr. Netanyahu by undecided

voters and new immigrants, primarily from the former Soviet Union.

This contradicted a poll published Monday in a Russian-language newspaper which showed that new immigrants preferred Mr. Peres over Mr. Netanyahu by around 50 to 40 per cent.

Press leaks of "secret" polls by various political parties have multiplied in recent days and the latest reports coincided with the official start of radio and television election campaigning on Wednesday.

Under Israeli electoral law, as of Wednesday all candidates in the May 29 legislative and prime ministerial election, including government officials, are barred access to television and radio outside of official, prepared advertising spots.

Election officials, however, ruled on Tuesday that in the event of a new anti-Israeli attack or other "serious event," politicians and officials will be able to address the public via radio and television as long as they refrain

from electioneering. Israelis on May 29 will elect a new, 120-member parliament, or Knesset, as well as voting directly for the first time for the post of prime minister.

Likud meanwhile offered a glimpse of what peace efforts might look like under its leadership, setting out tough terms in an election platform for negotiations.

The right-wing Likud unveiled part of the platform on Tuesday.

The document said a government under Likud would "honour international agreements" but it made future talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) conditional on cancellation of the group's charter.

"The Israeli government (under Likud) will conduct talks with the Palestinian Authority... on condition that Palestinians honour all their commitments fully, including a complete cancellation of clauses in the Palestinian charter that call for Israel's destruction," it added.

Ex-consul to be tried

AMMAN (R) — A Jordanian businessman who was Sri Lanka's honorary consul in Amman will go on trial soon after an investigation into accusations he sold the illegitimate babies of Sri Lankan maids, officials said on Wednesday.

Tawfiq Abu Khajil had been detained for investigations related to various charges, including trading in babies and of sexual assault and rape, Justice Minister Abdul Karim Al Dughmi said in March.

But court and government officials on Wednesday declined to reveal the formal charges against Mr. Abu Khajil. "The investigation is over and the prosecutor-general referred the case involving Mr. Abu Khajil to the criminal court today (Wednesday)," an official told Reuters.

"A date for the trial is expected to be set within a week."

In Jordan trials usually take place a few days after setting a date.

One official said the trial would be closed to the media "because of its sensitive social and other implications."

Tribunal hears how ground was set for Bosnia atrocities

THE HAGUE (AP) — A war crimes tribunal turned into a history classroom Wednesday when a Balkan expert described how Yugoslavia's 1991 breakup set the stage for a murderous rampage blamed on a Bosnian Serb.

Dusan Tadic is charged with crimes against humanity, including the murders of more than 30 Muslims in and around Serb-run prison camps in northwestern Bosnia in 1992. On Tuesday, he became the first person indicted on Yugoslav war crimes charges to go on trial.

Dr. James Gow, a Balkan expert from London University, testified that frictions among the country's republics and ethnic groups were kindled after Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito died in 1980.

Intellectuals in the republic of Serbia began to place greater importance on Serb identity and question whether ethnic Serbs in other parts of Yugoslavia, like Bosnia, had really assimilated.

"Among Serbian intellectuals at that time, the question was not only of the status and the sovereignty of Serbia, but also of the position of

the Serbs living outside of the republic of Serbia," Mr. Gow said, projecting documents onto the courtroom's computer screens and television monitors.

He said Yugoslavia in effect split apart in May 1991 when Serbia blocked the rotation of the federation's presidency from Serbia to Croatia. Others date the split later in 1991 when Croatia and Slovenia seceded from the federation.

Prosecutors have said the Serb uprising against Bosnia's Muslim-led government turned Mr. Tadic, a father of two, into a free-lance killer and torturer who took sadistic pleasure in kicking prisoners to death.

Mr. Tadic, a stocky, 40-year-old martial arts expert, has pleaded innocent to the charges against him, claiming he is a victim of mistaken identity.

He fledged Wednesday as he listened to Mr. Gow's testimony. Dressed in a blue suit and flanked by three armed U.N. guards, he looked mostly at the scholar, occasionally pressing his lips together and readjusting his headphones as he listened to a translation.

3 dead in blast of explosive stockpile in Bahrain

BAHRAIN (AFP) — A three-year-old boy and his parents were killed and four other relatives wounded in Bahrain when explosives stored at their home blew up, a government official said Wednesday.

"Initial results of the investigation show (Tuesday's) explosion was caused by the presence and preparation of explosives in the building" in Sanabis, a Shiite Muslim village west of the capital of Manama, the official said.

A five-year-old boy who was seriously hurt and three other injured relatives were reported in the hospital as police continued their investigation.

The authorities cordoned off the area around the home which was destroyed. Published photographs showed a gaping hole through a concrete wall with steel reinforcement rods exposed as a car lay outside under slabs of concrete.

Rescue workers dug through the rubble in case there were more bodies, press reports said.

Bahrain has been rocked by 17 months of political unrest led by Shiite Muslims demanding a restoration of parliament, which the Sunni Muslim-led authorities suspended in 1975.

Tuesday's explosion followed a wave of bomb attacks in Manama.

Earlier in the day police defused a booby-trapped packet of cigarettes at a large shopping and business centre in the capital, while a time bomb exploded at a bus stop late Monday wounding two people slightly.

Informed sources said the two were policemen of Pakistani origin.

On Sunday a wave of bomb attacks — the most devastating against the business community since the unrest began — caused \$5 million in damage to Manama shops and offices without causing casualties.

The U.S. embassy has meanwhile urged the 3,500 Americans living here to be more alert and also warned them to avoid annual Shiite Muslim religious processions later in May.

"The U.S. embassy believes the risk to public safety has increased" after a surge in anti-government unrest in recent months, including the explosion of "incendiary devices in shops," it said in a recorded message.

"The U.S. embassy recommends that Americans in Bahrain exercise the strongest caution while following their daily business and social routine," it said.

The embassy also said Shiite Muslims were gearing up for large processions during the Ashoura holiday expected around May 26-27 and "we advise all Americans to avoid such processions."

Although some of the attacks "appeared" to target foreigners, the U.S. embassy said it had no reports of "specific threats to Americans."

Bahrain is also the administrative headquarters for the U.S. Fifth Fleet, which covers the Gulf and Red Sea area.

Woman in mass wedding gets annulment

TOKYO (R) — A woman who took part in a mass wedding organised by the Unification Church had her marriage quashed by Japan's Supreme Court Wednesday, court officials said.

The marriage that the 34-year-old woman took part in was ruled invalid because it was not based on the real condition of a married couple or on a decisive intention to marry, Kyodo News Agency reported.

The unidentified woman married a man aged 32 from Okinawa in a mass wedding held in South Korea in 1988, but later left the church and filed a lawsuit to have the marriage declared invalid, Kyodo said.

A court in Fukuoka, western Japan, ruled in her favour in 1993, and a high court supported the decision in 1995, it said.

The Unification Church, led by a South Korean clergyman, the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, was founded in Seoul in 1954 with a theology loosely based on Christianity. Members are known as "Moonies" by the church's detractors.

More than 13,000 church members were married in Seoul in the mass wedding in October 1988. Many of the couples were matched by Rev. Moon less than 24 hours before the ceremony.

Most were either Japanese or South Korean, but there were also brides and grooms from Australia, Ireland, Jamaica, Ghana and the United States.

Man accused of shooting youths over loud music

ROSARIO, Argentina (R) — An Argentine man shot and wounded 12 youths early Sunday because he was bothered by loud music playing outside the house next door, the local DYN news agency reported.

Eduardo Alfredo Huel, 48, was charged with attempted murder. DYN reported the man was drunk when he grabbed his 12-gauge shotgun, stepped outside and fired several rounds at the youths gathered on the porch of his neighbour's house. The youths, not seriously injured, were released shortly after being treated in hospital.

Life becomes a drag for Beijing smokers

BEIJING (AFP) — Beijing's numerous smokers will be forced to pursue their habit in private from next week, when an illicit drag in a public place will cost the perpetrator a 10 yuan (\$1) fine. Work units which come into effect in the capital on May 16, will face an even stiffer penalty of between 1,000 and 5,000 yuan, the Xinhua News Agency said Wednesday.

The ban extends to most public places, including waiting rooms, schools, cinemas, sports stadiums, railway stations and museums. Municipal authorities have set up special working groups to "monitor, stop and punish" any smokers who violate the new ban, which has already been enforced in other major Chinese cities. Xinhua said a survey of more than 9,000 Beijing residents, showed 94 per cent in favour of the ban and the use of fines to enforce the new regulation.

Sudan seeks to heal Egypt rift

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan has launched a diplomatic push to improve relations with Egypt, strained after Cairo accused Khartoum of supporting terrorism, a foreign ministry official said Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Sudan's ambassador to the U.N. said Sudan has proposed "security meetings" between Cairo and Khartoum and the signing of an extradition treaty in a bid to "put an end to terrorism."

"Efforts are currently underway to check the deterioration in our relations with Egypt," Minister of State at the Foreign Ministry Mustafa Osman Ismail told the independent daily Akhbar Al Youm.

Sudan will "carry on contacts with our brothers in Egypt for an objective discus-

sion of the issues that impair bilateral relations," Mr. Ismail said, without giving details on the contacts.

"We hope that we will be able to overcome the past bitterness and work out future relations that guarantee the security, economic and political interests of each party," he added.

Egyptian-Sudanese relations, already tense due to an ongoing dispute over the Halaib border zone, worsened dramatically after an attempt on the life of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Ethiopia last June.

Egypt blamed Sudan for the attack and accused it of harboring three of the would-be assassins. It also accuses Khartoum of backing militants fighting an anti-

government campaign on Egyptian soil.

Sudan's U.N. ambassador Ali Osman Yassin told the Egyptian daily Al Ahram received in Cairo that "Sudan is prepared to open a new page with Egypt."

"There are Sudanese proposals for security meetings between the two sides to put an end to terrorism," Mr. Yassin said.

He called for an extradition treaty between Cairo and Khartoum, saying, "In the past such an agreement was not considered necessary."

"We are prepared to provide Cairo with all information on terrorism, the infiltration (of militants into Egypt) and the smuggling of weapons," he said.

Jordan, Egypt agree to expand economic cooperation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee, co-chaired by the two countries' prime ministers, Abdul Karim Kabariti and Kamal Jazouli, concluded a two-day meeting in Amman Wednesday after reaching agreement on increased cooperation in various fields.

A statement following the closing session said:

A) Politics: The two sides emphasised the need for the aspired Middle East peace to be just and comprehensive and voiced their backing for the peace process on the Palestinian-Israeli track and efforts aimed at resuming Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese negotiations.

The two sides supported the latest agreement on a ceasefire in Lebanon and call on the world community to compensate that country for the great losses it incurred to its infrastructure and its citizens and the loss of life

and property caused by the fighting. The two sides also stress the need for concerted efforts to combat and denounce all forms of terrorism and call for the creation of a Middle East zone free of all forms of weapons of mass destruction in order to guarantee balanced security for the region.

They also underline the importance of protecting Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and voice their deep concern over the suffering of the Iraqi people and the need for ending this suffering.

The two sides agreed to pursue joint efforts in order to end inter-Arab differences and reestablish solidarity among the Arab states.

B) Economy: The two sides concluded several agreements which constitute a strong basis to achieve a qualitative improvement in their economic relations and these are:

1- An agreement on the creation of a free trade zone through which the two countries hope to liberate trade between them by gradual elimination of customs barriers and customs duty within 10 years.

2- An Agreement on encouraging and protecting investments to encourage investors from Jordan and Egypt to undertake joint projects.

3- An agreement on preventing dual taxation.

4- An executive programme for cooperation in tourism.

C) Planning: The committee reviewed an executive programme for cooperation in this field and decided to hold a second meeting for the concerned ministries in Amman in July.

D) Industry and specifications and standards: The two sides agreed on conducting a study for launching joint industrial projects in mining and producing equipment

needed for industrial inputs. They will also speed up the finalising of a feasibility study on a project for producing potassium sulphate. The committee stressed the need for unifying the two countries' standards and specifications and reciprocal recognition of these specifications and patents.

E) Electricity, energy and petroleum: The committee expressed its satisfaction over progress in the implementation of the electric power linkage between Jordan and Egypt, which is expected to be completed by the end of 1997, and decided to pursue negotiations between Cairo and Amman to ensure sufficient Egyptian natural gas supplies to Jordan.

F) Scientific research: The committee decided to link the two countries' seismicological stations and ensure the exchange of speedy and accurate information between the two countries in this field and also in environmental protection.

tion. This includes conducting surveys over the Red Sea shores in cooperation with neighbouring states. The committee also voiced backing for the creation of an Arab centre for the exchange of technological and technical consultations.

G) Agriculture: The committee called on the concerned authorities in the two countries to sign an agreement on technical cooperation in preserving animal health and to cooperate in combating animal disease and agricultural pests, especially the Mediterranean fly, and to conduct joint research and exchange expertise in means of protecting fruit trees.

H) Transport, communications and telecommunications: The committee expressed its satisfaction with the level of cooperation between the two countries and a decision to cancel a fee on fuel used by Jordanian trucks

in the Egyptian port of Nueiba to be applied on a reciprocal basis.

The committee expressed satisfaction with the launching of a fast maritime transport service between Aqaba and Nueiba as of May 1996, noting that this will boost transit and tourist activities.

I) Health and medicine: The committee decided to convene a meeting of the two countries' joint health committee to pass recommendations and decisions for speeding up the process of registering and pricing medicines, which will facilitate trade in this respect between the two countries.

J) Education and higher education: The two sides agreed to assign 75 seats of the total number of 300 seats normally reserved for Jordanian students at Egyptian universities for scientific specialisations. They also agreed that facilities be granted to school and university students from either side and to

exempt them from residence permit fees.

K) Information and culture: The two sides agreed to work out a draft agreement on cooperation between the Egyptian and Jordanian news agencies and to create a joint engineering team to secure linkage between television relay stations set up in Aqaba and Tabaa, to step up exchange programmes and to implement a cultural, technical and scientific cooperation programme for 1995-1997.

L) Labour and consular affairs: The two sides expressed satisfaction with the measures taken by the two countries to organise the entry of workers after securing work contracts approved by the Jordanian Ministry of Labour and the Egyptian embassy in Amman. They agreed to pursue the necessary consular and other relevant measures governing the residence of Egyptian workers in Jordan.